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OR,

LIFE IN RUSSIA.

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IVAN VEJEEGHEN;

OR,

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BY THADDEUS BULGÁRIN.

TWO VOLS.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

PROBABLY no other work which was ever published in Russia, acquired such a sudden popularity as the Novel a translation of which is now submitted to the British public. The first edition, which came out in the beginning of 1829, was sold off within three weeks after it issued from the press; it has been translated into the French and German languages; and, in its own country, its fame has extended itself to the lowest ranks of society.

Notwithstanding the abundance of intellectual riches with which the land we live in overflows, perhaps this small contribution to the stock of literature may not be altogether overlooked or despised, especially by those who have any curiosity,—to contemplate the social condition of a people which exhibits some features common to the whole of Europe a few centuries ago; while, in some other points, it resembles the splendidly industrious subjects of the ancient Pharaohs;—to con-

trast the state of mind in the most backward, with that in the most forward of European nations in the march of intellect ;—and, above all, to read a very interesting chapter in the great book of Human Nature.

Concerning the manner in which this translation is executed, a few observations are necessary, rather in extenuation than commendation.

To render literally all the peculiarities of a foreign idiom, is apt to produce a work not likely to be relished by the great majority of readers, and thus to hurt the main object for which a book of this sort, like the razors in the fable, is made ; that is—to *sell*. On the other hand, by giving to a foreign production all the characteristics of the vernacular idiom, an effect is produced which may be compared to that which results from a figure meant to represent an Eastern saint or ancient hero, dressed up in the modern costume of the West. Ignorant people may be pleased—but the taste of those who know better is shocked.

However, for more than one reason, it seems to be advisable to make a compromise between these two extremes, and to follow in this respect the prevailing fashion of meeting the ideas of the multitude half-way : but the original has been adhered to wherever the mean-

ing appeared capable of being rendered closely and neatly at the same time.

It has been found necessary to encumber the text with a considerable number of explanatory notes, which, if they possess no other good quality, may, at any rate, lay claim to the negative merit of shortness.

The translator must acknowledge his want of experience in book-making, and is sensible that many other defects besides, exist in the performance : the critical reader will find these out by far more readily than the unpractised writer ; but it will be very agreeable if, after all, he shall be adjudged not to have deserved ill of that *best of republics*—the Republic of Letters.

ABERDEEN,
1st June, 1831.

1. *What is the main purpose of the study?*

2. *What are the research objectives?*

3. *What is the research methodology?*

4. *What are the results of the study?*

5. *What are the conclusions of the study?*

6. *What are the limitations of the study?*

7. *What are the implications of the study?*

8. *What are the future research directions?*

9. *What are the references of the study?*

10. *What are the acknowledgments of the study?*

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IVAN VEJEEGHEN.

CHAPTER I.

The Orphan—a picture of Human Nature, after the manner of the Flemish school.

THE first ten years of my life were spent in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky, a country gentleman in Byalo-Russia* : there I was reared like a home-bred wolfling, and was known under the name of *the Orphan*. Nobody cared for me, and still less cared I for any body. None of the inmates of the house paid me any attention except an old, worn out dog, who, like me, was left to provide for himself.

I had no corner of the house assigned me for my lodging, no food nor clothing allotted me, nor any fixed occupation. In the summer, I spent my days in the open air, and slept under the sheds attached to the barn or cow-house.† In the winter, I lived in the bulky kitchen, which served as a rendezvous for the

* A district composed of some of the border-provinces, lying between the Empire of Russia and the old Kingdom of Poland.

† The farm-yards in Russia, and part of Poland, are supplied with roofs or sheds, on account of the sun's heat in summer, and the snow in winter.

numerous train of servants, and I slept on the hearth* among the hot cinders. In summer I wore nothing but a long shirt and a piece of rope about my waist : in winter I covered my nakedness with whatever came in my way—any old jacket or fragment of a peasant's coat served my purpose. With these articles I was furnished by compassionate people, who did not know what to do with their old rags. I wore nothing on my feet, which became so hardened that neither grass nor mud, nor ice, made any difference of feeling. My head likewise was left to its natural covering : the rain washed out the dust, and the snow cleared away the ashes. I was fed with the fragments from the servants' table, and feasted upon eggs, which I gathered in the neighbourhood of the hen-house, and about the barn ; on the leavings in the milk-pots,† which I licked with uncommon relish, and on fruit which I stole by night in the orchard. I was under the command of no one in particular, but every body ordered me about at discretion. In summer, they set me to herd the geese on the pasture, or on the banks of the pond, to protect the goslings and chickens from dogs and kites. In winter they employed me as a turnspit in the kitchen, and this was to me a most agreeable occupation. Every time that the cook turned his or her back, I would quickly apply my palm to the juicy roast, and under my wrist suck my greasy hand as a bear does its paw. I sometimes very ingeniously

* In Byalo-Russia stoves are not so much used, as raised hearths, on which fires are kindled.

† The milk is kept in large, round, black-earthen pots.

snatched pieces of bacon from the dripper, and stole cutlets out of the stewing-pan : my chief occupation was to run errands for all the men-servants, maid-servants, and even the foot-boys. They sent me to the *kartchma** for *vodky*,† placed me on the out-look in sundry places, without explaining their reasons ; with orders to whistle or clap my hands on the appearance of the squire, steward, and sometimes even of the other men-servants, or maid-servants. On the first word—"Orphan, run this way or that way, and call this one or that one"—I set off at the gallop, and fulfilled my instructions to a tittle, knowing that the smallest neglect would expose me to an inevitable beating. When they placed me on the watch, and forbade me to look about me, (which mostly happened in the garden, during the summer season,) I stood like one buried in the ground, not daring even to lift up my eyes or make the least motion, till they pushed me from the spot. Sometimes, though very seldom, they rewarded me for my zealous services with a piece of black bread, old bacon, or cheese, and I, not being famished, would divide it with my beloved dog Koodlashka.

Observing how other children were fondled and kissed, I wept bitterly, from an inexpressible feeling of envy and chagrin : the caresses and blandishments of Koodlashka alleviated my grief, and made my solitude more tolerable. If other children caressed

* A Polish hostelry is called a *kartchma*.

† *Vodky* is an ill-tasted sort of whisky, made from malt and rye flour.

their mothers and nurses, I would do the same to my Koodlashka, calling him *mammy* and *nursy*, lifting him, kissing him, pressing him to my breast, and tumbling with him on the sand. I had an inclination to love my fellow-creatures, particularly those of the other sex, but this inclination was thwarted by fear. All beat me and knocked me about, either from chagrin, for diversion, or from ennui. When I happened to meet any of the lackeys or maid-servants, after they had got a scolding or beating from the higher powers, they would wreak their vengeance upon me, driving me out of their way either with a blow or a curse. If I chanced to be tempted by curiosity to look on while they harnessed the carriage-horses, the coachmen, to raise a laugh among the other by-standers, would strike me on the head with the whip, and, lashing my feet, make me leap from the smart.

I did not dare to approach the sportsmen within reach of the whipper-in. The herdsmen would also amuse themselves at my expense, by driving me into the midst of their flock, and observing the effects of my fear in trying to extricate myself from among the cows and sheep. The two sons of the squire would also take their sport in shooting at me from a bow, or pursuing me with little lap-dogs, from which, however, my Koodlashka always defended me.

The *Ghospodeen* himself I rarely saw : meeting me once in the court-yard, he forbade me to come near the windows of the mansion, and stamped so terribly with his foot, saying, " Get out of the way, you little savage," that I no more dared to appear in the pre-

sence of so august a personage, but would hide myself in the dog-kennel if I only chanced to see him at a distance. His lady and her two daughters I had no opportunity of seeing, except through the garden-fence or in their carriage, and knew them only by their dress. I stood in the utmost fear of the steward and his wife, because they occasionally flogged me, for an example to their dear little son, who was not disposed to learn his lessons, but preferred robbing birds' nests and throwing stones at the Ghospodeen's ducklings and chickens. The destruction of the domestic birds by this little good-for-nothing, was laid to the blame of the kites and of my carelessness. As a punishment for his frolics they would place him to witness how I was whipped, and to hear a lecture which used to be concluded in these words: "Observe, Ignatius; if you continue to romp and not to learn, you will be flogged too, as severely as this orphan. Do you hear how he screams? You will have to sing the same song by and by!" In recompense for the dramatic performance of this didactic experiment, the steward's wife would give me a bit of bread and cheese, or a pot of milk, which I swallowed with tears, without understanding the cause either of the punishment or gratuity.

This is all that I recollect of the first years of my childhood, which is impressed on my memory as an era of unalloyed sorrow and suffering. At last it pleased providence to lighten my hard lot, and at least to include me in the number of rational creatures.

One of the female servants, *Masha*,* a cheerful and kind-looking girl, who used to place me on the watch in the garden oftener than the other chamber-maids ; this young woman meeting me one day in the court-yard at twilight in an autumn evening, beckoned me to her, and patting my head, said : " Take this paper, orphan : keep a fast hold of it and go to the village. There, in the starost's† house, ask where the officer lives, give him the paper and return home. Only don't tell any body that I sent you, and if any one should want to take the paper from you, don't give it up though you should eat it. Dost thou understand me, orphan ?" " I understand you." " Now, repeat all that I have told you." I repeated it word for word, which gave her such satisfaction, that she almost kissed me and would have actually done it, if I had not been so dirty. " But dost thou know the starost's house." " Why should not I know it : isn't it the third house from the Kartchma ?" " Very well ; but dost thou know what officer it is ?" " To be sure, the gentleman who has red facings to his coat, who rides by on horseback, and who comes in the evenings." " That's enough : I see you are a sharp, active boy, and if you acquit yourself well, you shall have plenty of bread, meat and everything : dost thou hear ?" " I hear you : " replied I, and immediately whistling on Koodlashka, I ran out at the gate with great speed.

* The vulgar name of Mary.

† The starost is the elder or chief of a village, elected either by the villagers themselves, or appointed by their proprietor.

It was three versts* to the village by the highway, but, by a short cut known to me through the fields and hedges, it was not the half of that. Having got to the starost's house, I met the officer in the porch, whom I knew by his features, made my bow to him, and delivered the note. He looked at me from head to foot, smiled and ordered me to follow him into the *eezba*.† There, having read over the paper, he appeared very well satisfied with its contents, and as a reward, apparently for good news, gave me a bit of fruit-pie. This was the first time in my life that I partook of that dainty. I could not contain my ecstasy at feeling in my mouth a hitherto unknown agreeable sensation : in the officer's presence I began to devour the pie, at the same time laughing and capering for joy.

At this moment another officer came in, and they were both highly taken with my wild simplicity in tasting sugar, wine, and different sweetmeats. "Who art thou?" asked the officer to whom I was sent. "The orphan:" answered I.—"Who were thy parents?"—"I do not know." "What is thy name?" "The orphan." "Poor creature," said the good officer, patting my cheeks : "I will do something for

* A verst is two thirds of an English mile.

† An *eezba* is that part of a peasant's house which is inhabited by himself and family ; the whole premises consist generally of a court-yard with a covered roof, of an inclosure for the cattle, another for the hay, an ice-cellar for the milk and meat in summer, a storehouse for oats, rye and buck wheat, and a covered porch with a door, to intercept the exit of heat from the *eezba* in winter ; lastly the *eezba* itself which is heated with a large brick oven-stove.

thee." "Isn't he a pretty boy?" added the officer, turning to his companion. "He really is," answered the other: "only it is a pity that he is kept like a pig." The caresses of these good officers raised my spirits to such a degree, that I, recollecting how I had seen other children caressed daily by their fathers and mothers, fell a crying and threw myself down to kiss the feet* of the persons who, for the first time in my life, treated me with humanity. My tears and gratitude made a powerful impression upon them. They redoubled their kind treatment, and gave me different sweetmeats to take with me. "Go home, now, orphan," said the officer to me; "and say to the person who sent you," "very well;" "but so that nobody else may hear thee." "Dost thou understand me?" "I understand. I will take a hold of Masha's skirt, and pull her aside, and tell her that the good gentleman said, "very well." "Excellent: could not be better. This boy is very quick for his years," rejoined the officer, "and I will make a man of him: good bye, orphan."

In general all secret commissions lie near to the heart of the employers, and become a source of good fortune to the employed when they are promptly executed. This was the case with me. On arriving at the manor-house, I slipped into the kitchen, and observing that Masha looked rather uneasily, first at me, then all around her, I did not appear as if I wished to speak with her, but slunk out of the kitchen. Masha

* This is an usual mode of asking a favour of a superior, among the common people.

followed me, and when I gave her an account of my embassy, she also patted me and praised me for my activity, ordered me to tell no one of what had happened, and promised next day to reward me. I spent the most agreeable night in my life under the roof of the farm-yard, on the straw with my Koodlashka, who kept me warm while I dreamed the whole night of officers with pies and sugar.

Next morning, while I was prowling, as usual, about the kitchen, to pick up what might come in my way, I saw Masha who beckoned me to her, and ordered me to follow her to the steward. Supposing that I would have to encounter another whipping for the benefit of the little scape-grace, I fell a crying and was preparing to run away to the officers in the village. But Masha having assured me that no harm was intended, I followed her, trembling however from fear. They washed me, and combed me, or properly speaking, scraped me, put clean linen upon me, and some sort of a coat, and then led me into the apartments occupied by the squire and family. I was exactly in the predicament of a sheep in the hands of its shepherd, which trembles for fear, not knowing whether they are going to shear it or slaughter it. I was stationed in the lobby and ordered to wait. It astonished me greatly that the lackeys and foot-boys who were passing and repassing through the lobby, did not beat me nor laugh at me as usual.* This gave me some cou-

* In the houses of the Russian country gentry, a stranger or visitor will find the behaviour of the servants to be a pretty accurate thermometer of the dispositions of their master or mistress,

rage ; but when the door leading from the inner-rooms suddenly opened, and I beheld the Ghospodeen in all his glory, with his lady, the young misses and their brothers, who all came straight up to me, my presence of mind utterly failed me, and the recollection of the squire's orders not to approach the house-windows, came fresh upon my memory. An icy coldness thrilled through my veins. I trembled, shrieked with terror, and wished to make a hasty retreat from the lobby ; but they stopped me. By good luck, I observed the officer in the number of the spectators ; I threw myself at his feet and exclaimed in a pitiful tone : " Pray, good Sir, don't let them flog me : I am really not to blame !" " Poor orphan," said the officer ; " how he is harassed and frightened ; rise, my little friend : " added he ; " they will not whip you, but feed you with pies."

The word *pies* had a magic effect upon me. I rose, wiped off the tears with my sleeves, and looking about me, observed that the squire grinned and smoothed his mustachios, the misses held their handkerchiefs to their eyes, and their mother turned aside from me, while the little masters from behind their mamma, protruded their tongues and made grimaces.

" Mr. Kantchukoffsky," said the Ghospodeen, addressing himself to the steward, " I take that boy to serve in the house, and, at the request of my eldest daughter, he is to wait upon her in the capacity of

the one being as variable as the other. This rule, however, is only applicable to people whom the master and mistress consider to be their inferiors, or who are in any way dependent upon them,

English jockey. Send to the town for the Jew-tailor, and order him to make a suit for him after the picture which my daughter will give you."

"I hear you," said the steward, with a profound obeisance. "I am taken with the boy," gravely continued Mr. Gologordoffsky; "it is astonishing that I did not remark him before in the house." The females began to caress me and pat me. "What is his name?" asked the squire of the steward; but neither he nor myself could answer that question. They sent to enquire at all the servants, and the result of the investigation was, that amongst them they furnished me with the name of Ivan. From that time they ceased to call me "the orphan," and I was known in the house under the name of Vanky Englishman, from my jockey dress. I am not the first nor the last in the world who has been indebted for his name and dignity to his dress.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Gologordoffsky and his Family.

WHEN Byalo-Russia formed a part of Poland, Mr. Gologordoffsky shewed a great attachment to Russia, and farther proved that he sprang from an old Russian family, which had settled in this country in the time of Mstislaf, the brave. On the incorporation of this district with Russia, Mr. Gologordoffsky, of a sudden became a devotee of the old Polish government, and began to trace his origin to a chamberlain of the ancient Polish King Popel, who, upon the authority of written documents, is said to have been devoured by mice on the island of Hopel. Mr. Gologordoffsky very much regretted those blessed times when a powerful nobleman could crush the poor gentry with impunity, and while he called them his brothers and equals, might flog them with rods, while they lay stretched out upon a carpet as a mark of distinction between them and the peasants ; and when he might lock them up in the house-prison, or take possession of their estate if he had a mind. He particularly regretted the change of customs at the diets or elections of magistrates. In good old times the rich proprietor brought along with him some cart-loads of poor-gentry, accoutred with arms and ready to fight, and set them to elect himself and his friends to the different offices, and to

knock down and cut down the rival candidates. These days were called the golden age of freedom. Mr. Gologordoffsky thus having his privileges abridged from without, could only rule within his own domains on the old footing. Besides his numerous household servants, who were his own vassals, he had in his service a number of poor gentry who thought to make up for their low calling by high-sounding titles. The household of Mr. Gologordoffsky was exactly such as, in days of yore, were those of the ancient feudal Barons and of the old Polish *Pans*. The principal servants were, in the first place, the confidential agent for the management of law-suits, of which there were always pending in the different courts two or three dozen; the commissary, or head-steward, over the whole property; the *econome* or under steward; the *marshalek* who presided over the table-service and the domestics; the stud-master who governed the stables and grooms; the head cook or commander in chief of the pots and pans, cooks and kitchen-maids; the *okhmeestreena* or housekeeper who commanded the maid servants, and superintended the linen and the pantry, which in Polish is called *aptetchka*, and contains sweets of all sorts, preserves, confections, sugar, coffee, and a numerous array of spirits and cordials. Besides these servants of honourable station, there lived in the house in all readiness, the *kapel-meister* or music-master, who taught the young ladies and gentlemen music, and presided at the orchestra, consisting of twelve people, who in winter (besides) filled the office of footmen, but in summer raked hay, and worked in the garden.

The *kapelyan* or chaplain, a monk of the order of Jesuits, had under his inspection three tutors, and watched over the education of Mr. Gologordoffsky's children : in addition to this there was a French *gouverneur*, and *madame*, a French woman, with the young ladies. The gardener, a German, was at the same time member of the board of agriculture. The squire had for his own person a free valet de chambre, a *shlyakhtitch** who was a favourite and his confidant in secret affairs : his lady had likewise a maid of equal rank for the same purpose, who, though she discharged all the duty of chambermaid, yet, in virtue of her birth and merit, exacted respect in the house, and was addressed *Panna* or Ma'am. The young ladies had likewise each a *panna* from among the *shlyakhtyankas*, who had charge of their wardrobe and the female servants of their suite, of whom, with each of the young ladies, one bore the appellation of *Garderobnoy*. The chase formed a department of itself, and was partly under the inspection of the stable-keeper, and partly of the squire himself, who was a great sportsman. Amongst the sportsmen were several *shlyakhtitches* who went under the name of *strelitz*. Most of the upper servants, such as the law-agent or *plenipotent*, *commissary*, *marshalek*, *stud-master*, *econome*, *kapelmeister* and *gouverneur*, lived in the house with their wives and children ; besides their salary they received rations of provisions for their own table or ordinary, were attended by the servants of the house, and kept

* *Shlyakhtitch* is the name given to the small Polish gentry ; synonymous with the old English term of franklin or yeoman.

their own horses at the squire's expense. All the other free servants also received rations ; the house vassals were partly fed from the squire's table, and besides that had a table of their own. But as the free servants spent a great part of their allowance in drink, and the vassals never had enough to eat, every one laid hold of whatever he could, by hook or by crook. Besides these feudal attendants, there lived in the house for the sake of company and amusement to the squire and his lady, some gentlemen and ladies, toad-eaters, friends and distant relations, under the name of residents. They received no salary, but had the advantage of the table, kept their own servants, and some of them had the privilege of keeping horses. Amongst the number of these residents were some bachelor creditors of Mr. Gologordoffsky, some widows of old servants whose wages had remained unpaid after some twenty years' service, and some orphans possessed of capital under the guardianship of the landlord. In a word, Mr. Gologordoffsky's house contained nearly as many mouths and stomachs as there were working hands on the whole property, and from this cause the working hands were sadly tormented, and made but feeble exertions to fill the stomachs of so overwhelming a majority of sinecurists. It is true that Mr. Gologordoffsky himself, his family, and guests invited to partake of his hospitality, ate and drank well ; but his huge table had at one extremity what is called " a grey end," where no dainty-dishes or savoury wines ever reached, and where in full measure was felt the inconvenience of a disproportion between *outlay* and *income*.

Mr. Gologordoffsky, as a mark of his Polish extraction, wore long mustachios, which he frequently stroked, particularly when he talked on important subjects, such as the county-elections and law-suits, and disputes with his neighbours, whom he reckoned to be all inferior to himself, notwithstanding that many of them were richer and more serviceable to their country. Mr. Gologordoffsky's pride was founded on the antiquity of his family, which he proved not by historical documents regarding notable transactions, but from the journals of the courts of law, in which for the course of four centuries were recorded complaints against robberies committed by his ancestors, and the decisions which ensued. Families of one or two centuries he called upstarts, and declared them unworthy to be connected with him, or received on a friendly footing. He had a particular prejudice and dislike towards those who had made their own fortunes in an honest way, and had not inherited them from their ancestors. He admitted to his house all without exception, but feasted sumptuously only such persons as were necessary to him, such as people in office, capitalists and money-lenders ; and was particularly kind to such gentlemen as from interested motives shewed him extraordinary marks of respect, and listened quietly to his stories and abuse of his enemies. In the mornings, when the weather was unfit for hunting, Mr. Gologordoffsky occupied himself with his law-papers : his agent composed them, and he merely for his amusement added to the papers chicaneries, personalities, and imaginary pretensions. After that, he

went round all the court-yard to solace himself with the salutations of his numerous servants. After entertaining himself during dinner with jokes, (not always the most delicate,) at the expense of those who sat beside him, he lay down and took a nap to evaporate the fumes of the wine.

Till evening his time was devoted to particular amusements, selected by the ladies, in which, however, Mr. Gologordoffsky partook only as a spectator. In the evening, Josel, the Jew, made his appearance, who rented all the mills and kartchmas on the property. This Josel was general agent for the whole house, privy counsellor both of master and servants, walking newspaper, and relater of all political news, and scandalous anecdotes within a circle of a hundred miles round, and teller of every thing good and bad. The Jew was master of two powerful talismans for the subduing of hearts, viz. money and *vodky*. He was necessary to all, from the master down to the lowest cowherd in the village; all were in his debt, and all had more inclination to borrow than to pay. With this Jew Mr. Gologordoffsky spent the greater part of his evenings, while he sipped his bowl of punch, gathering from him all the news from the capital, and government-town,* where the Jew had his correspondents. Along with the Jew, he, devised projects for

* The reader is probably aware, that Russia is divided into provinces called *Gubernias*, or governments, and that in the chief town of each province, there is a governor, police-master, procureur, and courts of law. These governments again are subdivided into districts, or *ooyezds*, which have each their subordinate magistrates and courts of law in the *district-town*.

the sale of corn, spirits, and wood, for the borrowing of money, and for the avoiding payment of old debts. He counselled with the Jew concerning the commencement of new law-suits, the continuance of such as were already begun, and the endless spinning out of those of long continuance. The Jew proposed different measures to increase the income without any previous outlays ; for instance, to make the peasants' horses carry loads, to cut canals in another man's property, to hew wood and burn charcoal on his neighbours' land, and the like. In a word, the Jew-farmer was regarded as the principal personage on the estate, next to the proprietor, and would have been more indispensable to Mr. Gologordoffsky than his head to his shoulders, if it had only been possible to transfer the mouth to some other part of the body. Without regarding such a close relation, the Jew, knowing the character of Mr. Gologordoffsky, insinuated himself into his confidence, and flattered his pride, solemnly assuring him that he esteemed Mr. Gologordoffsky as the only real gentleman and grandee in the government. In this way the Jew, enjoying his confidence, sucked like a real vampire the life's-blood of his fellow-creatures, grew rich, and, like the moving sands of the desert which absorb all the moisture of living nature, dried up the surrounding sources of riches, and spread around him poverty and barrenness.

Mrs. Gologordoffsky regarded herself as of much higher origin than her husband. She hinted that she would never have taken him for her husband, but for some particular circumstance in which a Russian Colo-

nel of Hussars played the principal part. In other respects she led a very peaceful life with her husband, and he did all in his power to please her. She selected her own society, and chose what diversions she thought proper, her husband having the honour of being invited to participate in them along with the family. Mrs. Gologordoffsky never asked her husband for any thing ; she bought in the shops whatever she wanted or whatever she fancied, whether it was necessary or not, and sent the merchants to her husband, who was obliged to pay his wife's debts, notwithstanding that it was with the greatest reluctance that he would discharge even his own. In other respects, Mrs. Gologordoffsky was a very good sort of a lady, although she did not at all meddle with the management of the house : she behaved civilly to the servants, but did not pay the least attention to their wants, and never heard to an end any of their reasonable requests. She believed from the bottom of her heart, that her kind word and smile were more valued by all of them than either good food, clothing, or wages. She dearly loved to read sentimental romances, still more dearly to talk with the gentlemen upon the tender passion, but most of all loved dress. Some girls amongst her vassals, who had been taught dress-making in Warsaw and Petersburg,* incessantly laboured at sewing and shaping ; almost every week, cases and packages arrived from

* The Russian and Polish gentry are in the practice of sending some of the young boys and girls of their household as apprentices to different trades in the metropolitan cities ; indeed, almost all the apprentices of the different artizans there, are composed of this class.

Petersburgh, with caps, bonnets, head-dresses, patterns, and all manner of frippery. Every day she dressed herself like a doll, although there should not happen to be a single guest, while, on the other hand, Mr. Gologordoffsky, in the midst of all his feudal pride, walked about at home in a greasy great-coat, made in a half old-Polish fashion, and appeared in the presence of his wife, as if he was the first of her most obedient servants.

The Misses Gologordoffsky, Petronella and Cecilia, were good-looking, affable in conversation with gentlemen, bold as dragoons, sprightly and cheerful.—They excelled in dancing and music, spoke French extremely well, sung charmingly, dressed with great taste and elegance after their mother's example, and along with her read sentimental romances. They were both tender hearted, and could not bear in their walks to go through the village for fear they should behold the misery of its inhabitants. Petronella was eighteen, and Cecilia, the youngest, sixteen years old.

Two sons, the one in his twelfth, the other in his fourteenth year, were real baboons for mischief, cunning, and the like. They were continually playing tricks either on their teachers, sisters, or servants. The greatest disturbances which they made were ascribed by their parents to the uncommon abilities and fertile genius of their children, on whom they rested all the hopes of their family, and treated them as if they were heirs to the Mogul empire. The name of *Infanta*, which was given to the eldest son in jest by an officer who happened to pass that way, was kept

up ever after. The servants who did not know the real meaning of this title, gave the little scape-grace no other name, and this tickled the fancy of the old people, who anticipated for their sons the highest ranks in the army, millions in their coffers, and princesses for brides, as the due recompense for qualities by which, in the world, every thing is lost and nothing gained.

With regard to the other inhabitants of the house, they were so numerous that I cannot now recollect them all, and when I was afterwards in Mr. Gologorodoffsky's house, many of them were no longer there. Father Ezueet, being a Jesuit, was a riddle to all except the lady, whose confessor he was.

The steward was a walking whip, or instrument of infliction: all trembled before him, except the Jew and the squire's favourite dogs, whom he did not dare to punish.

The marshal and stud-master—irrational creatures, a sort of utensils for digesting provisions. Their whole duty consisted in staring vacantly on the crowd of supernumerary servants, bowing to their master and mistress, always saying "Yes," eating for four, and getting drunk every evening on mulled wine.

The law-agent belonged to that class of people, whom you might, without any compunction of conscience, hang first and try afterwards, knowing for certain that every week in his life, you would find good and sufficient reason for so doing. His soul was, it may be said, composed of nothing but hooks and eyes, to lay hold of whatever desirable objects might come

in his way. With him nothing was right nor wrong, white nor black. The laws he esteemed only as words whose excellence consists in their capability of being twisted right or left. In a word, the law-agent was professor of chicanery, and next to the Jew, first counsellor to Mr. Gologordoffsky.

The commissary—poor commissary ! His duty consisted in seeing that all the estate was in order, also in the chequing of accompts, and the collecting of incomes ; but, as every thing was in disorder, as the incomes were collected before they were due, and if the thing itself were possible, without any revision of accompts, the poor man from grief spent eleven months of the year in drinking, and, in the twelfth, composed a general statement, or, properly speaking, made a summary of the incomes, copied it out on a sheet of clean paper, and presented it to the squire, with the N. B. that they had been previously collected (although not in full) in the course of the year : this highly pleased Mr. Gologordoffsky, who took it for granted that he really possessed as great an income as appeared in the *Itoga*.

The most important personage in the house was the *Oĭhmeestreena* or housekeeper, not so much because she was acquainted with all the lady's secrets, and enjoyed her confidence in an unlimited degree, but because she had under her power all the strengthening juices, such as rum, cognac, bitters, and liqueurs.—The whole house treated her with deference, not excepting even the young ladies, who received from her preserves and confections. This respectable personage

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would declare with a fastidious look her dislike to strong liquors, and although she, every evening, without waiting for supper, stretched herself out upon her bed with a fiery face, and a nose glowing like the end of a candle, *that* proceeded from an excruciating tooth-ache, which obliged her to apply spirits to her gums. This at least was *her* version of the story. There is no doubt that Mr. Gologordoffsky also put great faith in this medicine ; for he very frequently put his hand to his cheek, and made so frequent trips to the pantry, that the floor was indented with the marks of his footsteps all the way to the door.

Such were the people amongst whom I was the least by the destination of fate ! In the period of my childhood they all appeared to me uncommon, exalted beings, a sort of suns ! In process of time I learned their real value, and only make mention of them in this place, that the reader may not be astonished why they kept me in the house like a wild beast. Besides, we shall have an opportunity hereafter of meeting with some of the persons here mentioned, and on that account a previous acquaintance will be of service.

CHAPTER III.

Love.

ALL military men like to quarter in Poland, notwithstanding the poverty of the peasants, the extortion of the Jews, and the difference in the language and religion of the gentry. The truth must be told : the men among the Poles are excellent company, and the women full of the milk of human kindness, and generally more attached to foreigners than their husbands and brothers would wish. The quartering of soldiers, particularly of artillery and cavalry, is very agreeable to the landholders, the Jews, and the ladies. The first find a ready market for the productions of the soil, the second for their wares, while the women all find admirers, and frequently husbands, notwithstanding their profession of the Roman Catholic faith, the national antipathies, and the disagreeableness of a military life. Every long stay of a regiment in any district generally ends with a couple of marriages, and one or two dozen of anecdotes, propagated by old maids at the expence of young ones. At these anecdotes modest people are first of all thunderstruck with amazement, then they give credit to them, and finally consign them to oblivion till another opportunity. In general the Polish women are lovely, understand the art of pleasing, and loving tenderly, with all the refinements of romantic

passion, and, although constancy does not form a prominent feature in their character, yet, who in love thinks of such occurrences? There are no rules without exceptions; and is it possible to refrain from loving the Poles merely from fear of inconstancy? The Poles seem fully persuaded, that women are created for love, and they spend all their youth in agreeable musings. I may add that, in the Polish language, there exists a particular verb, invented for the expression of the most tender, and, in other respects, the most trifling occupation of life, to *romance* (*romansować*). This denotes a tender, respectful, passion, mutual pleasure founded on principle and attachment; but it can nowhere subsist out of Poland, where the free intercourse between the sexes is not only permitted, but regarded as indispensable. Italy alone excels Poland in the freedom of the women. In Poland nobody thinks it strange or improper for a married or unmarried woman to converse alone with a gentleman, to walk arm in arm with him at a distance from others, to receive from him small presents or entertainments, although she be neither attached, betrothed, nor related to him. Tender looks, soft words, sighs, complimentary verses, music, and even letters, excite no attention on the part of parents or by-standers. There they say openly, that such a one is in love with such a one, that he flirts with her; that such a woman is in love with such a man; and all this does not destroy a female's reputation. Tender lovers make one another mutual vows and promises, build aerial castles of future happiness, and after all separate in *sang froid*, without any

scandal. This is a place to call to mind the proverb : 'like priest, like people,' 'like country, like fashion.' In the meantime I may honestly assure my readers, that, without regarding the freedom of intercourse, perhaps no where in the world are there so many virtuous young women as in Poland, believe it who will. Of married women I make no mention, because - - - because that is not our present subject.

On Mr. Gologordoffsky's estate was quartered a Lieutenant Meloveeden, with a troop of Hussars. He had all the good and bad qualities of a young dragoon ; was brave and honourable, acquainted with service, but was frequently out of order owing to his giddiness and his extraordinary passion for amusements. Without being in the least covetous, he played high, and frequently lost his last kopeek* at cards, merely from ennui or from having nothing to do ; with a natural disposition to temperance, from mere frolic he would drink tokay as he would water, and champagne as quass. His principal occupation was gallantry. Of a handsome person, affable and clever, brought up in the circle of the best Moscow society, an excellent dancer, musician, and painter, versed in the productions of French literature, and gifted with an uncommon memory, Meloveeden, a spoiled child of fortune, became an object of love to all the young women for a hundred miles round. For him they made fetes, and always wished to have him at their parties, and what was most astonishing of all, the gentlemen, that is to say the landlords, not only were not angry with him for

* A kopeek is about the tenth-part of a penny sterling.

the open preference shewn him by the women, but even loved him. Meloveeden was, in the full sense of the word, a good fellow, open hearted, and with all his sharpness very simple. He did not quarrel with the Poles on politics; he drank with them to the health of old patriots, and sincerely abused the people in office. For this he enjoyed the confidence of the old and the friendship of the young landholders, who wished to form themselves into a sort of Meloveeden in Poland, or at least in Livonia. A high distinction which few Russians attained in Poland!

His heart was so unbounded that he could love fifty women at the same time, without any defalcation of affection, and without tormenting himself with sighs and sufferings. At that time, of all the women and girls, he gave the preference to Petronella Gologordofsky, who, to say the truth, was passionately in love with him: you have no more occasion then, gentle reader, to guess from whom and to whom I was sent with the letter to the village! You understand now why I was promoted to the rank of English Jockey, and appointed to execute particular commissions for the eldest daughter of Mr. Gologordofsky. You doubtless conjecture, gentle reader, that I filled the station of postillion of love. Exactly so: my whole duty consisted in standing during meals with a plate behind my mistress's chair, and carrying billets-doux from the squire's house to the lieutenant's quarters, which I fulfilled with particular attention, exactness, and speed. For that I was loved by my mistress, and consequently by the whole family of Mr. Golo-

gordoffsky. The appellation of orphan was no more to me a mark of nothingness ; on the contrary, it expressed tenderness and compassion, and was pronounced with sympathy and particular kindness. The servants, following always the example of their lords, caressed me as much as they had formerly spurned me. This change in my fate produced a sudden change in my intellect, which was naturally keen. In half a year I understood every thing which was formerly a riddle to me, surpassed in activity all the boys of the house, and became what is called a roguish or sharp boy. For all this fortunate change I was indebted to love.

After the agreeable days of love and pleasure, there was a sad change. The regiment received orders to move into another government, and this unexpected occurrence was quite a thunderstroke to all the female population of the district. The doctors travelled from house to house, the apothecary's laboratory was put in motion ; messengers galloped along every road, some to the town with recipes, some with letters. It appeared as if the plague or some epidemic disorder was spreading its ravages in the neighbourhood. And in reality, spasms, meagruns, vapours, nervous faintings, and vertigos attacked the fair sex. My mistress Petronella Gologordoffsky in particular, fell into a state of complete deprivation of all her faculties. She lay in bed, swore she would die for love, and refused to take the medicine prescribed by the doctor for a fever arising from cold. Her condition was really dangerous. Unceasing tears and sighs, want of sleep

and loss of appetite, might have given a bad turn to a slight cold brought on in the garden, during a late interview with her dear friend. She would take no advice nor consolation from her parents, sister, and companions, and was a little quieter only when Meloveeden gave her his word of honour to return as soon as possible, and confirm their tender love by marriage. The self-love of Meloveeden was touched by such a powerful expression of passion on the part of the charming Petronella: he had never in his life seen how people grew sick and died from love, and being both a witness and an object of a scene worthy to adorn the most tender romance of the days of chivalry, Meloveeden's feelings were overcome, and he resolved to reward the charming patient with his hand. But this promise was given in secret without the knowledge of her parents. They agreed to carry on their correspondence by means of the Jew-farmer, Meloveeden threatening to pull off his nose and ears if he betrayed him. He at the same time entrusted Petronella's second aunt by the mother's side to bring the match to a conclusion. The lovers foresaw the difficulty of obtaining the consent of Petronella's father, who fed himself with the hope that some travelling prince, no matter though he might be a native of Asia or at least some potentate, would ennoble his blood by a union with the Gologordoffsky family. But as of all human follies love is the most powerful, our lovers expected to overcome the ambition and stubbornness of Mr. Gologordoffsky, or, at any rate, to break through them by force.

CHAPTER IV.

Purposes of Marriage.

DREARY winter came, and Mr. Gologordoffsky had frequently to go to the Government-town on account of some of his law-suits which had terminated not in the most agreeable manner. His law expences reduced him to some sort of retrenchment at home ; and made him keep his family in the country at the time of the county elections, which drew all the gentry to the town for some weeks. This obstacle brought on a fit of melancholy on Mrs. Gologordoffsky and her youngest daughter. The eldest, without that, was sick enough at heart. In vain did father Ezueet preach upon the vanity of this world : they heard him with sighs, and interrupted him to begin the conversation upon balls and dresses. Mrs. Gologordoffsky lamented only that her absence at the time of the elections would give visitors from other governments and military people a very unfavourable opinion of the taste of the female sex with regard to dress, and that, without her daughters, they could not dance mazoorkas* and French quadrilles. After this preface began a critical disquisition upon all the females of the whole government, from thirty years of age down to sixteen, which ended with the conclusion, that it was only Mrs. Gologor-

* A fashionable Polish dance, also naturalized in Russia.

doffsky and her daughters who had no moral or physical deficiencies, and that all the other females were sadly neglected by nature. The *residents, confidantes*, and the misses living as companions, as well as the wives of the agent and commissary, and withal father Ezueet, confirmed with one accord the opinion of Mrs. Gologordoffsky, and this served as some consolation for her grief. If the tenth part of what Mrs. Gologordoffsky said concerning the females had been correct, it would have been the duty of the men to seek for wives not only in another government or in another empire, but in another planet. Fortunately all the mothers thought exactly the same of themselves and their daughters as Mrs. Gologordoffsky: it would be necessary then to believe in all the failings of the fair sex with the exception of the present company.

Meloveeden remained constant: he returned an answer to every ten of Petronella's letters, full of tenderness, with the additional attraction that it was written on rose-coloured or green or light blue paper: this was the fashion at that time in the country. Although I could not read these letters, I formed conclusions regarding their contents from the effects which they had on my mistress's temper, who, while she read them a hundred times, always began with crying and ended with laughing. Meloveeden gave her a description of his new acquaintances, various adventures, characters and anecdotes, which soothed my mistress in her forlorn state, and delighted both her and her sister. The Jew faithfully performed the duty entrusted to him, receiving from the post-office

and forwarding the letters with the greatest exactness. Notwithstanding that I was now of no more use to my mistress, she continued to love and caress me: with me were associated sweet recollections, and besides, Meloveeden had recommended me to her protection.

Spring came on, but the roses no more bloomed on the cheeks of the fair Petronella. She became from day to day more disconsolate, and could not without tears look upon the little birds sitting in pairs on the branches. All knew the cause of her grief; but, except her sister, the faithful Masha and the Jew, no one made mention of her beloved, or soothed her with hopes. Once on a pleasant* spring-day at sunset, the whole family dined in the garden. Roasted chickens with salad, improved by the addition of sour cream, and a bottle of Tokay presented as a rarity by the Jew-farmer, put Mr. Gologordoffsky into such a happy disposition of mind, that the aunt took the resolution to avail herself of this opportunity to fulfil her commission. She made a sign to the young ladies to withdraw, and began her speech first with some general observations on the happiness of wedlock, where the attachment between the parties is mutual, alluded to the pitiable state of Petronella, who was a victim to love, and at last plainly declared that she was authorised by Meloveeden and her niece to beg the consent of the parents to the marriage, and

* The month of May in Russia is generally one of the most delightful seasons of the year. We have some such weather for days in England, but a whole month of it would be an unprecedented occurrence.

pulled out his letter from her bosom. Mrs. Gologordoffsky was silent during the discourse of her cousin, sighed, looked at the clouds and see-sawed with her head. On the other hand, Mr. Gologordoffsky at the beginning of the speech began to shew symptoms of impatience and chagrin. At first he redoubled his draughts of wine, then his face grew red, and at last, when he had finished the bottle, he grew quite furious, knocked violently with his fist on the table, making all the bottles and glasses dance, and roared vociferously, "Enough!" However the officious aunt was not to be daunted by all this uproar, but quietly said; "I don't see what can hinder this match." "Much, very much, Ma'am," replied Mr. Gologordoffsky; "and you do not perceive it, because you never inspected the archives of my house, and apparently never noticed the family-portraits in the dining-room." "But is not Meloveeden a gentleman," added the aunt; "his father and grandfather held the rank of generals." Mr. Gologordoffsky grinned savagely; "Ma'am," said he, "I was before you in my inquiries at Meloveeden concerning his family, and learned from himself that his nobility begins only with his great-grand-father." "Do you think that insufficient?" asked the aunt. "So insufficient, that nothing could be less so for entering into an alliance with a family which counts its nobility from the fiftieth generation. And so you see, Madam, that my nobility bears the same proportion to that of Mr. Meloveeden as fifty to three, consequently there is a *leettle* difference between us." At this he smiled triumphantly. "But

in our times the old and young gentry have the same privileges of distinction, and the same period of service conducts them to a higher rank,"* said the aunt. "That is not our business, Ma'am," replied Mr. Gologordoffsky, "You know our old proverb, 'A gentleman in one town is equal to a lord in another.'" "Consequently Meloveeden is equal to you," added the aunt. "It signifies," said Mr. Gologordoffsky, "nothing less, than that it is only gentlemen who are equal in birth, who are equal among themselves, without regarding difference of ranks. Besides, it is not antiquity of family alone which will give a man a title to be my son-in-law—he must have riches, immense riches, in order to keep up the dignity of the united families; but Meloveeden is as bare as a hawk." "It is true that Meloveeden's father spent all his property in the service," said the aunt, "but he has a rich and childless uncle who does not intend ever to marry. He has a great liking for his nephew, maintains him in the service, and designs to make him his heir." "What authority have you for that?" asked Mr. Gologordoffsky. "I have seen Meloveeden's uncle's own letters," replied the aunt. "That is all castles in the air: it is a shame for you, Ma'am, to think of debasing my family to such a degree, as to propose to unite it with a man who has neither name nor property,"

* In Russia before a man can attain the lowest dignity, he must serve a certain number of years. This period is shorter for the nobility than for the other classes; the order of priests comes next in rank, after them the merchants, then the lowest bourgeois, and foreigners last of all, unless where a special exception is made in favour of individuals.

said Mr. Gologordoffsky emphatically, while he rose from his chair: "I beg you will never mention it again, if you wish to preserve my friendship." "Very well," resumed the aunt, growing red with chagrin: "but allow me to make one observation: you surely do not wish that your daughter should die for love, or should be forced to marry against her inclinations?" "Do not trouble your head about that, Ma'am," said Mr. Gologordoffsky: "girls don't die for love, but on the contrary become very happy when they are married against their inclinations. As a proof of that, there is your cousin,* my dearly beloved spouse, who was also in love with an officer before her marriage, and fainted thrice before pronouncing the fatal "Yes" at the hymeneal altar. All this was got the better of in time, and I flatter myself that Mrs. Gologordoffsky does not repine at her unhappy lot, although her husband wears neither sword nor uniform. "Is it not true, my love?" added Mr. Gologordoffsky, while he gave his wife an affectionate kiss for the first time since I had been admitted into the rooms. "Yes, it is true," replied his wife with a deep sigh. "Tell the people to saddle my riding-horse," said Mr. Gologordoffsky. "Ladies, will you please to take an airing with me for two or three versts, and I will shew you something new—a *kartchma* which I am now building on the boundary of my estate, and under the very nose of my neighbour, Protzessoaveetch. I have christened

* The cousins-german of a father and mother are called aunts and uncles in Russia, and the children of cousins-german are also called nephews and nieces.

this kartchma, 'The Thorn,' and it will be a real thorn in the side of my worthy neighbour. Isn't it true, Mr. Marshalek?" "It's a real truth," answered the marshalek with a low bow. "I will give orders to sell spirits there at a lower rate than they are sold in my neighbour's, and in this way I shall draw all his peasants to my shop. Isn't it true, Mr. Commissary?" "Exactly so," answered the commissary. "If he should think to drive his peasants away from my kartchma, I will summon him into court and bring an action against him." "Exactly so, 'tis a real truth," answered the agent, "we will sue him 'pro incursione et violentiâ.'" While Mr. Gologordoffsky continued the dialogue in this strain with his servants, who, while the marriage was on the tapis, stood at a respectful distance, Mrs. Gologordoffsky went into her apartment to dress, and the aunt joining the young ladies, walked along with them into a dark alley, apparently relating the success of her application. I do not know what passed betwixt them, but, to my utter amazement, I observed no tears in my mistress's eyes when she returned to the door to take her seat in the carriage. On the contrary it appeared to me that she was more cheerful than usual.

CHAPTER V.

Ball and Elopement.

Mr. GOLOGORDOFFSKY wished to celebrate his wife's birth-day, and, at the same time, the gaining of a law-suit for ten *deshateens** of land. This-law suit had lasted thirty years, and had cost each party sixty times the value of the object in dispute. But as the main point consisted in gaining the victory, the public manifestation of joy served as a recompense for all the trouble and expence incurred during the progress of the law-suit, along with the ruin of the opposite party. For a week previous, invitations were sent to the relations, neighbours, and also to distant acquaintances within the government. The Jew-farmer brought two other Jews as contractors for the furnishing of wines and groceries for the feast. The said contractors, as I afterwards heard from the steward Kantchukoffsky, disposed of goods belonging to our farmer, who did not wish to sell the articles in his own name, as, in that case, he ran the risk of being paid with a bill or bond, which he could not refuse to take from Mr. Gologordoffsky. As the matter stood, there being no ready money in the house, and the corn not being yet

* A *deshateen* is a Russian measure of land, equal to 117,600 English square feet.

ripe, the wheat and rye on the ground were sold at so much a deshateen ; or, as it is called, sold in the stalk. Our farmer got a power of attorney from the said purveyors for the receipt of the corn after it should be cut and threshed, and three dozen of calves, once they should be born, with an obligation to feed them for eight months. In this way Mr. Gologordoffsky, by selling his corn while in the bowels of the earth, and his cattle before they came into the world, received a large supply of wine and delicacies for his table, which were to be all consumed in one day.— All the sportsmen belonging to the house and neighbouring villages were dispatched to the wood in search of game ; each of them was furnished with one pound of gunpowder and three pounds of shot, on the understanding that every one should bring forthwith sixty head of game. For each two pounds of powder allowance was made for missing three shots ; and for the remainder, they had to pay the squire at the rate of ten kopeeks* silver for each shot missed. The Jew-farmer presented Mr. Gologordoffsky with a list of all the peasants who possessed fowls, chickens, eggs, and butter. To these people the household-vassals were dispatched to take possession of all these articles either by fair or foul means. Those who gave them up willingly were to be promised in recompense an abatement of so many days labour on the manor : †

* Fourpence sterling.

† According to the written law of Russia, the peasants can only be obliged by their masters to work for them three days in each week ; but, in practice, this regulation is null and void.

those who refused were to be put in mind of the existence of Mr. Kantchukoffsky, and threatened with an execution. What is called an *execuzia* in the Polish governments is the quartering upon a peasant of some of the household-vassals, usually the greatest blackguards, who riot, eat, and drink in the house, till the peasant pays his dues, or complies with his landlord's demands. Sometimes these executions are inflicted as a punishment for not working well, for rudeness to the Jew, and for various other causes. The preparations for the ball during the week made an extraordinary stir and bustle in the house. The villages were scenes of rapine and robbery. The hungry vassals of the household acted like real marauders. They searched for fowls in the chests, butter amongst the linen, and eggs in the bosoms of the peasants, poking into every hole and corner, and insulting in every possible way the poor villagers, both males and females. It is the greatest hardship to which a country can be subjected, when people of the lower orders, uneducated and unprincipled, are entrusted with power. They endeavour to make others feel the full weight of their authority, and think that they excite respect when they make others tremble before them. The peasants and their women were continually fleeing to the manor-house with complaints that they were asked for what they had not to give, and swore that the Jew had made a false statement as regarded them. Vain complaints !

The peasants are *actually* obliged to do all their masters' field-work before they touch their own. In case of refusal, their masters can find means to punish them as they think proper.

Mr. Gologordoffsky believed the Jew more than his own wife and children ; he referred the complainants to Mr. Kantchukoffsky, whose look alone was enough to frighten them away. Day and night the work went on in the kitchen, and, in order to prevent stealing, sentinels from the stables were placed at the kitchen doors, who themselves stole pieces of meat, fowls and eggs, and in the night time carried them to the kartchma. All the servants were employed in cleaning and furbishing up the rooms. For the first time in the course of the year the cob-webs were swept away and banished with the family-portraits. Arm-chairs of oak and alder were covered with new linen. Mahogany furniture, which adorned two rooms in the house was rubbed up with olive-oil. The floors were re-scraped, seeing that to wash them was out of the question. All the looking-glasses from the other apartments, besides those belonging to the upper servants and *residents* were taken into the principal rooms, which, in addition to all other changes and repairs, were adorned, the day before the fetè, with festoons of spruce and fir-branches. The household musicians rehearsed and practised continually in the barn, where father Ezueet, who was allowed, through all the government, to be a great chemist, prepared fire-works for a surprise to Mrs. Gologordoffsky : two sportsmen worked under his direction. For the horses of the guests a separate stable was fitted up, and a provision of guests' hay was prepared ; that is to say, a score of cart-loads of rushes and weeds, which it would have been impossible to grind with a mill-stone, putting horses' teeth out of

the question. *Guests' oats* were a mixture of chopped straw with husks and siftings of wheat. The laws of hospitality require that guests, their servants and horses, should be filled ; but as the landlord's duty is confined to looking after the entertainment and treatment of the gentry, if the servants and horses are starved, all the blame falls commonly on the steward, in case any of the guests should think of his horses and servants.— Besides, with *necessary people*, such as the powers that be, of the government and district, there is another mode of procedure ; *their* servants and horses being committed to the special care of the marshalek and stud-master.

At last the day of the *fetè* arrived. A number of guests came in the morning. Carriages, calashes, breetchkas and koleemashkas,* occupied all the space between the stables and farm-yard. Almost every family brought along with it a score of horses ; six in their own carriage ; four in the breetchka, containing the male and female servants, trunks, and band boxes ; and a pair in the koleemashka, which contained the bedding packed up in large square chests, and the cooking utensils for the road stowed among hay. Single persons came with six horses, and very few with four. Some families came with a still greater number of these animals, as a badge of the importance of their owners, and I really do not think it amiss that Mr. Gologordoffsky should have contrived to feed them with bulrushes, husks, and weeds. This custom of going a visiting with a whole stud at the expence of

* A sort of cart.

another, has the same consequence to the entertainer as the inroad of a Tartar horde ; and if the landholders did not prepare this forage for guests, which is nothing but the shadow for the substance, two country balls would eat up their whole yearly stock of hay and oats. But, as no assembly can come together without cattle, the main point is to know how to get them decently off their hands.

After morning prayers, breakfast was served up, or properly speaking, dram-drinking, as the ladies ate but little, and the gentlemen drank more than they ate. Spirits of different colours and tastes* were unceasingly circulated, till the decanters were emptied. Then the gentlemen walked into the garden to join the ladies. In the mean time the cloth was laid in the dining-room, and, as fresh guests were continually arriving, four lackeys continued to serve up spirits and whets in the garden.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, when dinner was on the table, the musicians, led by the Kapel-meister, stationed themselves on the flight of steps leading to the garden, and played a Polish air. This was a signal for dinner, and all the guests assembled in the principal alley. Mr. Gologordoffsky offered his arm to his most distinguished guest, the wife of the Government-marshal. The Marshal himself led up Mrs. Gologordoffsky, and in this way, two couples in a row, they moved into the dining-room. The other guests

* In Russia the making of all different sorts of cordials and bitters is much better understood than it is in this country : even in the very lowest classes they are connoisseurs of that art.

also followed in couples, that is to say, the ladies alongside of the gentlemen. It is true that Mr. Gologordoffsky managed to place the most respectable guests higher, notwithstanding they came into the hall later. Before they were seated, he called them out of the crowd according to their rank,* and begged them to occupy the place nearest to the landlady, arranging these movements with various jokes and proverbs. The dinner was luxurious, and, although more than a hundred sat down at table, there was abundance of provisions. With regard to wine, the following arrangement was adopted. The common table-wine, that is to say French wine, was placed in decanters before the guests. The best wines of different qualities were carried about and poured out under the direction of the *marshalek* and *stud-master*. The first with three footmen on the right side of the table, the other with the same number of assistants on the left. On each side, the first lackey held bottles of the very best wine, the second with a middle quality, and the third with the most common, appertaining to the class of best wines with only one name. The *marshalek* and *stud-master*, by a previous understanding, took their cue from Mr. Gologordoffsky's style of address, what sort of wine to pour out for each guest: for instance, when he said to a guest, "I beg you will drink, Sir, do honour to my wine, I assure you it is worth trying;" then they poured out the first sort.

* In the houses of the greater part of the Russian gentry, who have never seen any world but their own, this practice is still kept up.

"Drink a little wine ; it really is not bad," denoted the second sort. "You don't drink any : hey, pour out wine to the gentleman," marked the third sort. It appears that Mr. Gologordoffsky knew perfectly the tastes of his guests, for they all drank a decent portion, and regularly complied with the landlord's invitation. Besides, I reckon Mr. Golodordoffsky's behaviour very commendable : why treat a guest with what he is not acquainted, and when he is as well satisfied with the name as with the quality of his wine ? Some drink Champagne and Tokay, because they find that these wines please their taste ; others merely in order to have it to say, "We have drunk Champagne and Tokay !" Who does not know the proverb, 'Do not throw your pearls before swine ?' At the end of the dinner a huge goblet was brought in, adorned with coats of arms and inscriptions. Mr. Gologordoffsky poured wine into it, drank to the health of his spouse, and with loud cries of 'Vivat' ! with peals of music and flourishing of trumpets emptied it, and bowing to his next neighbour, added, "Into your hands." Exactly with the same ceremonial the cup went round from hand to hand. At last, when all the party refused to drink more, with the significant observation, "that the day was not over yet," the landlord rose, all the guests following his example, and each of them taking one or two ladies by the arm, walked away tottering into the garden, where coffee and sweet-meats awaited them. Hardly had the gentry left the dining-room, when the lackeys belonging to the house and to the guests, the musicians and

maid-servants, rushed in like harpies upon the remains of the feast, and without listening to the hoarse voices of the *marshalek* and *stud-master*, tore every thing to pieces, and emptied the bottles to the very lees. In the kitchen the greatest confusion reigned while the servants got their dinner. Without the least ceremony they helped themselves, took possession of the pots and pans, and satisfied their appetite which had been sharpened by the journey. In recalling to my mind all the particulars of this feast, I am persuaded that the one half of the provisions consumed would have been amply sufficient both for masters and servants; but, in this case, order would have been requisite, and that was a thing quite neglected in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky.

After dinner some of the old gentlemen went to repose,* the greater part of the guests seated themselves around card-tables, where some experienced hands with mere amateurs sat down to faro. All those gentlemen who during dinner had made loud complaints of bad times, and on the ruin of the corn-trade, produced at the table gold, silver, and heaps of assignats.† Some of them having lost their last kopeek, in the

* The *siesta* is not confined to southern climates. In the heat of summer, not only elderly people, in good circumstances, but almost the whole body of the people, take a two hours nap, usually from one to three, P. M.; but, then, working people, in summer, are in the habit of rising at three or four o'clock in the mornings. Even in winter, the habit of sleeping after dinner, is by no means uncommon.

† Government paper money of which there is about six hundred millions of roubles (upwards of twenty-four millions of pounds sterling) in circulation.

height of their phrenzy sold their horses, equipages, cattle, and the copper kettles of their distilleries, and hoping to regain these, lost still more. Young gallants and old beaux sat beside the ladies, and, heated with wine, made declarations of love, or entertained the ladies with their nonsense and drolleries. At length, when it began to be damp out of doors, the ladies went into the house to dress and prepare for the dance. At eight o'clock the rooms were lighted, the music struck up, and Mr. Gologordoffsky opened the ball by dancing a Polonaise with his wife. The dancing continued till twelve o'clock, when supper was served.

This was as abundant and luxurious as the dinner, only the drinking took another turn. Almost all the guests made themselves beastly drunk. They sent away the musicians into another room, and began with declarations of friendship among the gentlemen, embracing and kissing one another, and promising to forget all quarrels and mutual differences. The ladies were called as witnesses to these reconciliations, and were obliged to become sureties for the fulfilment of the promises on both sides. On the well-known toast, 'Let us love one another,' (*Kochaymy się*) being given, the guests drank a full bumper, falling on their knees before one another, or embracing. At last they returned to the ladies, and began to drink every one of their healths from their respective shoes. A gentleman falling on his knees before a lady, pulled off her shoe, and, after that, respectfully kissed her foot and her hands, placed his glass in the shoe, and in some

cases poured his wine into it, drank it out, and handed it to another. On a sudden a salute from two dozen of muskets and some swivels roused the convivial party. All ran to the windows and beheld in the midst of the court the flaming initials of the lady in whose honour the entertainment had been given. A joyful *vivat* anew resounded through the hall. The music struck up again, and the large goblet again appeared upon the scene. Some scores of rockets and Roman candles were launched into the air to the gratification of the spectators. But, whether from ignorance or awkwardness, some rockets broke upon the straw-thatch of the barn, and the wind being pretty high, in a few minutes the roof fell in, and all the offices were on fire. It would be difficult to imagine the consternation occasioned by this unexpected occurrence. The drunken masters were troubled; the servants did not know what to do. All gave orders, but nobody was disposed to obey them. They knew not how to manage the fire-engines, and then every one ran to the fire, with a bucket, an axe, or a pike,* and nobody ventured to approach the flames. They sounded the tocsin, and sent to the village for the peasants: but they, it appeared, were not over hasty in coming to the assistance of their lord and master. The guests ordered their horses to be put to as fast as possible,

* In all the crown-villages, every house or cottage, in case of fire, is obliged to send one of its inmates with one of these three articles, a figure of which is painted on a board at the gate of each house. In the towns, each police office is provided with a fire-engine and people to attend it. A particular officer, the Brand-major has the command of these engines and people.

and their things packed up. The household-servants laboured for the preservation of the silver-plate and table-linen from destruction. The phrenzy, disorder, noise and confusion, and running to and fro, were enough to distract the most cold-blooded of mortals; every thing was turned upside down in the house. From sheer terror I did not know what to do, stood on the outer steps, looked at the fire, and fell a crying. On a sudden Masha appeared. "Vanky! I am looking for you: follow me." We immediately fled through all the rooms to my mistress's bed chamber. Masha put upon my head my gold laced cap which lay in my mistress's wardrobe, gave me a bundle and a basket to carry, threw her capote about her shoulders and told me to follow her. We fled through the garden, leaped through a broken fence, and alighted on a field beside a thicket. There stood a calash drawn by four horses. In the dark I could not discern who was seated in it. Masha occupied the fore seat, a whiskered footman placed me on the portmanteau behind, and he himself sat on the box along with the driver. The horses turned and trotted slowly to the mainroad, which was about half a verst distant, and then set off at full speed. However much wearied I was with faintness and over exertion, I could not shut my eyes. The fire was continually present to my imagination, and I shuddered when I thought of my mistress's fate, supposing, according to my reflections at that time, that probably every thing in the house would be burnt, and that on this account Masha had saved herself by flight, along with me. I thought that the carriage be-

ed to some one of the guests. In the calash I
d a whispering, but could not distinguish the words,
re speakers by their voices. At length by day-
k we arrived at the first post-house.

CHAPTER VI.

Marriage and Honey-moon.

WHEN I dismounted from the portmanteau and approached the carriage-door, I almost screamed with astonishment, when I saw Meloveeden and my mistress, Petronella Gologordoffsky, who, wrapt up in her cloak, was leaning with her head on the shoulder of her dear friend. "Do you know me, Vanky, said Meloveeden, with a smile." "How should not I know the good gentleman!" In the mean time, Cosmo, the whiskered footman, who had gone to the Post-house with the *podoroajney*,* returned with the post-master's answer, that there were no horses to be had. On hearing this, Meloveeden leaped out of the carriage, and ran instantly into the house, and I after him. The post-master, dressed in a morning-gown, was seated at a table, and turning over the leaves of a book, in which the *podoroajneys* were written.—"Horses," cried Meloveeden gruffly. "There are no horses at present: they are all taken up," answered the post-master coolly. "If you don't give me horses this minute," said Meloveeden, "I will harness yourself to the carriage, with all the two-legged animals in your house. Do you hear?" "You are pleased to joke," returned the post-master coolly. "Wont you rest a little and drink a cup of coffee; and in the

* Government licence to entitle a traveller to hire post-horses.

meantime the horses will come home." "The Devil take you with your coffee : I want horses," exclaimed Meloveeden in a passion. "There are no horses," answered the post-master again. "You lie : nobody travels on this road, and I met nobody on the way," said Meloveeden. "Please to inspect the post-book." "I don't wish to lose time uselessly, and in place of counting the pages, will count the lashes upon your back," said Meloveeden, taking a step towards the post-master. "It can do you no good to fall into a passion," returned the latter. "Please to read upon the walls the post regulations : you will see that, for insulting a post-master, who holds the rank of the fourteenth class of nobility, you are liable to a fine of a hundred roubles." "Ah ! if you want a fine," said Meloveeden, "I will pay you treble, and give you such a bellyful, that you will not, likely, have many more fines to receive in this life ; but listen, in the first place, I wish to argue the matter with you civilly. What is the charge for the legal number of horses to the first stage ?" "Sixteen roubles," replied the post-master. "See, I am willing to pay you double, that is thirty-two roubles ; and, besides, I will give you three roubles for coffee and tobacco : give me horses, or, by God, I will give you a thrashing !" "I see I can make nothing of you," said the post-master, "I must give you my own horses." On this he thrust his head out of the casement,* and cried to the drivers,

* The advantage of having a pane of glass upon hinges is not so much perceived in this country as it is in Russia : where, in the winter-time, it is almost the only comfortable way of admit-

"Hey, boys! Put to the duns, quick, in couriers' style." "You confounded rogue"! added Meloveeden, on receiving the balance. "What can one do, your honour"! answered the post-master, "we must live somehow or other." "That is one of the curses of this country: almost every thing is done *somehow or other*," said Meloveeden, going out of the room. In the mean time the horses were put to, and we set off. For three days and nights we traversed the highway, without any particular adventures. At every stage there was some hinderance, owing to our *podoroajney* not having the words, 'on government business,' written upon it. But Meloveeden, what with bullying, scolding, and bribing, got the better of the iron-bound obstinacy of the post-masters, who in general consider the performance of their duty to consist in dispatching couriers as fast, and detaining other travellers as long, as possible. On the fourth morning at day-break, within sight of a town, we turned aside from the main road, and after passing through a wood for five versts, arrived at a village, at the door of a peasant's cottage. Here was quartered a friend of Meloveeden, Lieutenant Khvatomsky. He came out to receive them, handed Petronella out of the carriage, and gave her his arm to his quarters. They immediately sent for a Russian and Catholic Priest, who had been brought thither on purpose, and waited Meloveeden's arrival. He shewed them his permission to contract a legal marriage, and the consent of the

ting a little fresh air into a room; opening an entire window being quite out of the question.

Catholic Bishop or *Indult*, with what is called a *window*, that is, a blank for the filling up of the names ; in two hours the whole ceremony was concluded, according to the Russian ritual, in the church, and according to the Catholic, in the Priest's house. After reposing and dining with Khvatomsky, the newly married couple at twilight set off for the town, where Meloveeden's quarters were. To avoid surmises, he did not chuse to appear before the squadron but with a legal wife ; this precaution doubtless does honour to his character.

Meloveeden, before going for his bride, put his quarters in as good order as possible for her reception. He hired two rooms in the house of a rich Jew. But as cleanliness does not follow in the train of riches among the Jews, he got the rooms finished on his own account. The walls were hung with coloured paper, the floors painted ; in the inner room an alcove was formed of deals for a bed chamber, and the division was hung with carpets. The windows were adorned with pink curtains, and, from a female friend of his, the wife of a country gentleman, living, by a decision of the Consistory-Court, separated from her husband, Meloveeden got the use of a piano-forte, a dozen of chairs, a couple of lombard-tables, and a mirror. Some pairs of pistols, Turkish sabres and scymitars, a Persian horse-furniture, and two muskets, hung in the drawing-room in place of pictures. A pyramid of pipe-stalks, with huge heads and gilded stoppers, served also for an ornament to the room. In a word, looking to the place and circumstances, Meloveeden's rooms

were wonderfully well furnished, and hardly inferior to those of Mr Gologordofsky himself. Besides all this, there lay on the piano-forte a bundle of music expressly ordered from Petersburg, and on a shelf in the bed room, some dozens of new French romances with plates. Meloveeden had neglected nothing to make his dwelling agreeable.

Petronella sighed with astonishment on entering the lodgings for the first time. After looking about her, she threw her arms around her husband's neck, and wept for joy and gratitude at such a reception.—Next day, Meloveeden, with his wife, visited the Colonel, pay-master and quarter-master, besides one or two married officers, in order to introduce her to their wives. For the course of a whole week, he was entirely taken up in making visits along with his wife, in the neighbourhood, and was everywhere congratulated on the beauty and amiability of the charming Petronella.

Soon after, guests came in from all quarters to visit them. Meloveeden liked good company; had dinners, evening-parties, and suppers, which usually ended with a drinking-bout and cards. Time passed away, and money along with it. At first they bought wine and provisions for ready money; after that, took them upon tick; and at last, when the Jews saw that they did not pay their debts, they gave no more credit, and Meloveeden had to pawn his things.

Petronella's parents would receive no more letters from her, and returned what she had sent unopened. Meloveeden's uncle was also angry with him for hav-

ing deceived him, in saying that he was marrying a rich heiress ; and, for marrying without the consent of his relations, he refused to give him any more money. Meloveeden engaged in play upon credit ; he associated with gamblers who cheated him, and stripped him of all that he was worth. His circumstances became critical. Within six months after his marriage, every thing which it was possible to sell was sold ; nothing remained to pawn, nothing to gamble with, and nobody to borrow from. Meloveeden then resolved upon the last resource—to go with his wife to his uncle, in hopes that by her charms she would melt the obdurate old man. Having got leave of absence he sold his last saddle-horse, and, with the proceeds, redeemed out of pawn his calash ; and, collecting the remains of his property, his linen, saddles and fire-arms, he pledged them with the Jew, his landlord, in order to raise wherewithal to pay his travelling expences. Mrs. Meloveeden would on no account part with her dresses or Masha. She was certainly to blame, and so, after filling the carriage with band-boxes, and taking with them Masha, the footman and cook, my master and mistress set off for Moscow. They left me in their lodgings to take care of the things left in pawn, and the Jew was ordered to feed me on their account.

CHAPTER VII.

A rich Jew—Sources of his Riches.

IN a month after Meloveeden's departure, the regiment marched into other quarters, and I remained with the Jew along with the effects, as none of the officers were able or willing to redeem them and take with them the locked up trunks. Being left alone with no one to look after me or protect me, in the natural course of events I became the servant of the person who fed me, that is to say of the Jew Moses, the master of the house, who was reckoned to be one of the richest inhabitants of the town. His wife Reefka, * a fat woman of a low figure, whose head was decked all over with pearls, and, besides, some natural cutaneous ornaments not quite so pretty, kept a shop for silk stuffs, sugar, coffee, and dried fruits. Moses traded in the house, in wines, porter, and provisions for the table, groceries, Dutch herrings, cheese, and, in fine, all articles pertaining to gastronomy. But as a Jew cannot go on without dealing in spirits, in addition to his other business, he kept a tap for peasants and the lower sorts of people. The retailing of spirits is a most indispensable thing for a Jew in the Polish provinces. By this means he procures for the tenth part of their real value all sorts of provisions, and keeps his house

* A contraction for Rebecca.

for almost nothing. Besides that, by means of the *vodky*, he picks out of the peasants and servants all the secrets, all the wants, all the connections and relations of their masters, which makes the Jews the real rulers of the actual landholders, and subjects to Jewish controul all affairs and objects in which the precious metals and assignats act a part. In real fact, the landholders are merely gratified with the clink of the cash and the look of the notes, while the Jew is the real owner.

In Moses' writing there lay three huge books or registers of debts. The first contained the debts of the fair sex, contracted in Reefka's shop; the second held the debts of the landholders, or of such men in general as were called *Pans*,* for eatables and drinkables; the third book contained the debts of unfortunate peasants, who, coming into town to sell the produce of their land from necessity, kept only as much money as would pay their masters' dues, and drank the balance besides running into debt. In order to make the reader understand in what manner the Jews go to work with the peasants, I shall mention how Moses balanced one of his accounts, of which I was an eye-witness.

The peasant alluded to came into town the night before market-day with two loads, the one of rye, the other of wheat, and brought two cows with him for sale. He put up for the night at Moses' house. The wily Jew, seeing that the farmer was sitting down to supper with three of his companions, treated him with a glass of his best and strongest *vodky*. The peasant

* A term synonymous with what '*gentleman*' was formerly in English, or *miles* in the Latin of the middle ages.

was uncommonly pleased with this beverage, and the Jew gave him another glass for nothing. When the peasant's head grew light, he ordered a *kvalt** of the same spirits to be given him, for which he would pay. The Jew only waited for this—he knew his guest's free and open temper; and hardly had the peasant drunk this, when he sent to acquaint some of his other companions, and invited some well known town-drunkards who had a particular knack at insinuating themselves into the confidence of strangers. In proportion as the senses of his guests grew stupified, the Jew added water to the spirits; and, though the people at table perceived this, and gave vent to their dissatisfaction in gross abuse, the Jew patiently bore their upbraidings, and continued his operations till the greater part of his visitors fell asleep on the spot, and the rest managed to stagger into the street.

Next day, when the peasant, tormented with a head-ache, went into the stable-yard where his horses and cows stood, the Jew demanded payment for the debts which he had accumulated in the course of some months. The peasant earnestly begged him to defer a settlement till another time; but the Jew, being a good psychologist, knew the rule—‘in corpore sano mens sana’—as well as its converse, and would not agree to a postponement, wishing to take advantage of the stupefaction of his guest's senses with the fumes of drink, in consequence of his yesterday's intemperance and the weak state of his mental faculties. The Jew

* A Polish *kvalt* is about a pint, English measure.

produced his book of debts written in the Hebrew* character, took a piece of chalk, placed the peasant on the opposite side of the table, and turning over the leaves of the book, began the settlement :—"Do you recollect," said the Jew, "how you lived here three days when you came in with loads before the summer-St. Nicholas†?" "How should not I recollect it?" answered the peasant. "The first day you took in the morning a half-kvart of vodky—is not that correct?" "It is so." "Now, here I shall note it;" and he made a mark with the chalk on the table. "Afterwards, when your brother-in-law came with Nicetas, you took another *kvart*;" and, at this word, the Jew drew two marks. "At dinner you took again two *kvarterkas*,"‡ and the Jew again drew two marks without regarding the difference of the measure. "After dinner,"—but the peasant, who was all this time scratching his head and rubbing his forehead, interrupted the Jew, "Paney Arendaryoo!" (an honorary appellation given by the Lithuanian peasants to the Jews), "I really have not strength to go on, give me some vodky, for I have an insufferable head-ache." This was just what

* It is the Rabbinical character which the Polish Jews use, but the words are German, though nearly as difficult for a stranger from Germany to understand as the broadest Scotch is to an Englishman.

† There is more than one Saint of that name in the Russian Calendar, who have each their holy days; but the two most notable ones are that which occurs a little before Christmas, and the other in the middle of summer. The most effectual oath in Russia is that which is taken before a picture of 'St. Nicholas, the miracle-worker,' (*Nicolai Tchudotvoretz.*)

‡ A *kvarterka* is the eighth-part of a *kvart*.

the Jew wanted. "Hey, Sorka*! Reefka!" cried out the Jew, "give the Hospodar a dram." (Hospodar is a title which the Jews, in return, give the peasants when they want to cheat them.) The peasant drank the fill of a large tumbler, making wry faces, and shrugging his shoulders, and the business took another turn. "After dinner," continued the Jew, "you took half a *kvalt*." "Right." The Jew made another mark. "But when Ivan came in, you again took half a *kvalt*." "No, I did not take it, but Ivan got it," answered the peasant. "Very well you did not take it," added the Jew, but in the meantime added another mark. "In the evening you took half a *kvalt*:" "Right."—The Jew drew another mark.—"And in the morning you got one." "No, I did not," answered the peasant. "You did not get it," said the Jew, but nevertheless drew another score. "At dinner, next day, you took half a *kvalt*." "No, only a *kvarterka*," answered the peasant. "Very well, let it be only a *kvarterka*," returned the Jew, but drew a mark denoting the measure of half a *kvalt*, which contains in itself four *kvarterkas*. In this way was the reckoning continued: during all the time Moses' daughters, Sorka and Reefka, kept plying the peasant with vodka; and the Jew went on scoring, it mattered not whether the peasant agreed or disagreed with the items marked against him, and making no distinction of measures when they were less than half a *kvalt*, but adding scores when the measure was more. At last, when the peasant's head grew giddy and his eyes dizzy, the Jew pulled out of

* A contraction for Sarah.

his bosom a piece of chalk with a split in it, like two blades of a knife, and with this double instrument proceeded to draw two scores, in place of one, at a time. When the table was all marked over, the Jew called in as witnesses to the settlement some of the peasant's neighbours, and they, after summing up the scores, reduced them into money : the unfortunate man had to give up to the Jew his best cow and all his wheat, although he was actually due, perhaps, only the tenth part of what he paid.

Almost in the same manner Moses behaved to the landholders ; only more artfully, and, in some measure, more delicately. However, the double chalk, overmeasure in wines, &c. were also made use of in his reckonings with the gentry, as well as with the peasants. The Jew, knowing that Polish *Pans* and Russian officers do not like to keep account-books, and are quite disgusted with long reckonings, used to fix upon a favourable time for his views, and pounce upon his debtors at the precise moment when they were either in a very merry or in an extremely low mood.

Moses' wife, Reefka, who also sold goods upon credit, and, in place of interest, received from the landholders' wives whole tubs of butter and coopfuls of domestic fowls, chose such a time for settling with her debtors, when they were in the greatest want of credit—for instance, before balls, elections, and marriages. In this sort of trade it was impossible to cheat by the same means as in the sale of wines and spirits : but the wily Reefka, taking advantage of the necessities and vanity of her customers, gave them short

measure and short weight, charged a double price for every thing, and, besides that, contrived to squeeze presents from them, under the pretence that she herself got the goods upon credit and was obliged to pay interest. Besides that, her trade brought her this advantage, that, by means of their wives, Moses had a claim upon the husbands, that is, on the pecuniary speculations of the landholders. They were even glad that, for silk-stuffs, and laces, for wine, rum, porter, sugar, and coffee, they could pay according to their pleasure, in wheat, flax, hemp, or other agricultural produce; seeing that the Jew, on these occasions, would purchase the remainder of their stock for ready money, at a valuation also fixed by the Jews, and commonly for the half of what the articles would bring at the regular markets and shipping ports. The landlords in these provinces have, in general, no idea of business, and receive their commercial information solely from the Jews. Throughout a whole government, there are only a few persons who take in newspapers, and they merely for notices of law-suits, and for the convenience of reference, if the conversation should turn upon politics.

All this Jewish trade, founded on knavery, is called lawful, because the Jews engage in it openly; gaining, however, much more in a concealed manner, by means forbidden both by law and conscience.

Moses loved me for my modesty and docility: he regarded me as his own servant, because Meloveeden, having withdrawn from the army and settled in Moscow, had relinquished his effects as well as

myself, not having the means to redeem them from pawn.

Moses also employed me upon the most secret commissions, and promised me mountains of gold if I would resolve to turn Jew. Although I knew nothing of Christianity, having been brought up like a wild animal, however, the mere name of Jew went against my grain ; and without positively refusing, I declined changing my religion, under different pretences, and in the meantime resolved to flee from such a calamity.

One day there alighted at Moses' house two agents of rich proprietors, on their return from Riga with money received for corn and hemp which they had sold. These gentlemen-agents, it appeared, were on an intimate footing with Moses ; they gave him charge of all their masters' gold, which Moses engaged to return punctually next day ; and besides, to one of the two, a man unexperienced in such transactions, he gave in pledge silver money of an equal value.

At night Moses shut himself up stairs into his own apartment, called me and his son Judelia to him, and told us that we must work all night. He poured out of bags upon the table great heaps of ducats, and set Judelia to pick out of the heaps those that were large and of full weight : he spread a cloth upon the floor for me, sprinkled some sort of black powder upon it, and ordered me to rub the picked ducats upon it, squeezing them tightly to the cloth. Moses himself sat at the table, on which stood two wax candles, and a magnifying-glass on a stand. Judelia gave him the ducats, and he, looking through the glass at them,

pared them with little crooked scissars. I do not know how many ducats passed through our hands, but, before day-light, I changed three pieces of cloth, and Moses collected a whole tea-cupful of gold-clippings. The agents received their money back punctually without minding the weight, and, in recompense for their civility, they got each a few ducats to himself; and besides, the Jew charged them nothing for their horses' feed, for board and lodging, or wine, and gave them some bottles for the road. In the evening Moses burned the cloths and melted the clippings in a stove constructed for that purpose in his closet. Our night's work procured him a piece of gold as large as a man's fist. We were always engaged in this sweating of gold from ducats, whenever there chanced to be in the house any of his acquaintances among the stewards or agents of rich Pans, or when merchants or gentlemen put gold into Moses' hands to transact any business for them.

One evening Moses ordered me to prepare for a journey next morning. Reefka packed up in a small trunk a suit of Moses' best clothes, a black half-silk coat, fastening from the collar to the waist with small hooks, a small silk cloak with large pockets before, a pair of grey stockings, new shoes, and a round broad-brimmed hat: she also put in as many shirts as she reckoned he would be weeks absent; that is to say, a fortnight at least. She filled a separate basket with provisions, which consisted of one bottle of spirits called '*Shabashovfy*,'* on account of its quality, and

* From '*Shabash*,' the Russian term for giving up or resting

because they only drink it when work is over, at which time they sing the merry ‘Mayofees’;* of two home-made goats’-milk cheeses, two large radishes, two dozens of onions, one dozen of herrings, two rye-loaves, one string of Jewish *krendels* or *barankies*,† and a small piece of roast kid. This provision was intended to serve five persons for a fortnight. Along with Moses there were the Jew-driver, his brother-in-law Josel, his nephew Khatzkel, and poor I. The trunk and basket were put into my hands, and, when I observed to Reefka that that provision would be too little, she fell into a passion and scolded me. “Hold your peace, you ‘Ghoy.’‡ All your thoughts are taken up on your belly, and you never consider that every crumb costs money : people have need to take care of their money now-a-days, for times are bad enough in all conscience !” “Aye, but you have plenty of money for all that,” said I, muttering with my head partly ensconced in the basket. “How dare you say that we have plenty of money ? Hörsh tu !§ One would suppose you had seen and counted our money ? Hörsh tu ! Ah, you vagabond ! Ah, you villain ! How dare you say that we have money !”

from work ; apparently a corruption of the Hebrew word, ‘Sab-bath,’ or as it is pronounced by the Polish Jews ‘*Shaabat*.’

* The Jewish song of joy, which has no words.

† Hard biscuits made of wheat flour rolled to the thickness of a rope, and formed into rings of two to three inches in diameter strung together like a necklace in forties or fifties upon a piece of twine ; in which state they are sold.

‡ Infidel, synonymous with Ghiaour in Turkish.

§ A corruption of the German ‘*Hoerst du*’ (‘I say,’) (literally ‘hearest thou.’)

The Jewess shook with anger, threatened to beat me, and would probably have carried her threats into execution, if I had not assumed the defensive, and cried out in reply : " Why are you angry, Panay Arendarsha ! If you touch me, I will cut and run !" Our outcry brought Moses to the spot, who, learning the cause of the disturbance, called out to his wife and took her into another room, where they scolded one another, grew quiet, and Reefka returning, patted me on the head, and gave me a large biscuit, adding ; " Don't be angry, Vanky ! I shall put into the basket for you a piece of smoked goose, and if our own Jewish folks wish for any dainties, let them buy them with their own money."

One of the neighbouring landholders was then putting up at our house. In the evening before Moses' departure, this gentleman ordered a tumbler of punch for himself and one for the landlord, and asked him to sit down beside him and give him his news. In general, the greater part of the small country-gentry regard the Jews as the best-informed people in every thing, even in politics ; and, in place of subscribing for a newspaper, expend the money which would otherwise be applied for that purpose, on punch and wine, and the time which would be lost in reading, they prefer to spend in dialogues with the Jews on the state of affairs all over the world.

The door of this gentleman's room chanced to be open towards the gallery, where, by the light of a night-lamp, I was posted to strip feathers for the Jew's beds, merely to prevent me from being a single minute

idle, and according to the Jewish saying, eating my bread for nothing. Every word was heard; but as long as they talked about trade, farming, war, and the governor, I took no interest in the conversation: however, when it turned upon Moses' journey, I pricked up my ears, being curious to know whither and why we were to go.

"It is strange, Rabi Moses," said the landholder, "that you who carry on such an extensive trade, should have thought of renting a kartchma on a property a hundred miles distant from your place of residence. I know that you make, besides, tar and potash there; but you might have all that, as we say, under your nose. I and every proprietor hereabout would be glad to have you for a tenant." "Particular circumstances, right-honourable Sir," answered the Jew, "occasion me to rent a place so distant from home. In that part of the country live all my wife's relations, and, from pure benevolence, I established my poor relatives in kartchmas. Potash and tar are more easily disposed of there, as that property lies upon the very frontiers. From all that I receive no manner of benefit, but take a journey thither twice a year to see that every thing is in order, to settle my accounts, and lay out the money for the payment of my rent: my wife's relations get all the profit, which I gratuitously bestow upon them." "It is laudable, very laudable, Rabi Moses," said the gentleman; "that example of yours is worthy to be imitated even amongst us; and to give them their due, there is too great an outcry raised against the Jews: for one such instance of dis-

interested love towards their relations ought to place their conduct in a more favourable light."

I was called to supper, and did not hear the conclusion of the dialogue. The reader will soon see what is the meaning of a Jew's disinterested love towards his relatives, and his benevolence without any advantage. Next day, a long *breetchka** was brought to the door, covered with oil-cloth, well smeared with tar and mud, to which three raw-boned horses were harnessed with ropes and the remnants of some gentleman's old harness: feather-beds and pillows were crammed into the *breetchka*, the trunks and boxes were made fast, and we set off on our journey. Moses, Josel, and Khatzkel, in greasy gowns and night caps, sat upon the feather-beds, quite close, almost one upon the other, and I at their feet on the clothes' trunk. As it was autumn, they gave me an old frieze great-coat to wear, which had been bought in the rag-market, and a cap which had been forgotten in the tap-room by some drunken footman: this cap was a great inconvenience to me, as it came over my eyes at every bounce of the *breetchka*.

I shall not describe our journey, which had nothing interesting in it, and continued for two days and a half.

On the third day, we turned aside from the main

* A *breetchka* is a long four-wheeled carriage, sometimes without springs, but generally having two hind-springs, and sometimes provided with a leathern cover like a gig or calash. Its form makes it convenient for holding a feather bed, and allowing travellers to stretch themselves out in it at full length.

road ; and about mid-day, arrived at a small kartchma which stood at some distance from a miserable village consisting of ten huts.

The landlord of the kartchma was delighted, it appeared, at our arrival, and immediately sent off three peasants with letters in various directions.

At night, Jews began to arrive, some on horseback without saddles, others in carts ; and by the time that the landlady had supper ready, about a score of them had assembled. As usual there was a collection of peasants in the kartchma, who came to spend the evening in smoking tobacco, drinking vodka upon credit, feasting upon dried fish and train-oil, and talking by the light of a fir-stick about their *ghospodeen* and his steward.

The Jews did not mingle with the peasants in the public room, but shut themselves into another apartment, where they talked loudly amongst themselves, speaking generally all at once. At last, when this noisy council was at an end, the tacksman drove out without ceremony the peasants from the kartchma, saying that the room was wanted to lay beds for his guests. To the discontented peasants, who did not want to shift their quarters, he gave spirits and tobacco to take home with them, and they went away singing to the village.

About midnight a gentleman arrived upon horseback : he remained half an hour alone with Moses, and I heard at the doors how they bargained : at last they shook hands,* and Moses counted out to the gentle-

* In Russia where most mercantile transactions are carried on

man some dozens of silver roubles and ducats. The gentleman, after drinking a glass of spirits to the health of the honourable company, and smoking a pipe of tobacco, seated himself on his horse and galloped into the wood.

The Jews after supper also separated. Moses and his fellow-travellers lay down, without undressing, upon feather-beds, and I upon straw.

A little before day-break, the tacksman awakened us, and we in two one-horse carts also proceeded into the wood, along a narrow road. I drove the cart in which Moses and Josel were seated, while the landlord of the kartchma with Khatzkel went before in the other cart. We had proceeded a long way through the wood before dawn, and at last heard the creaking of wheels, and the vociferous bawling of carters. Moses was overjoyed, and ordered me to make up to them. We soon met the cavalcade, consisting of fifty carts loaded with barrels of tar and potash. Only one Jew accompanied them : the drivers were peasants. In order to speak with this Jew, Moses ordered me to turn the horse and follow the carts. After proceeding on the way back about two versts, at a turn of the road, we met with a file of Cossacks belonging to the frontiers, along with whom was the very gentleman whom I had seen in the kartchma : he was not a military man, but dressed very plainly.

Upon seeing us he made the detachment halt, and with the officer of the Cossacks rode up to the carts.

verbally, the shaking of hands between the two parties when the bargain is concluded is an universal practice.

"Are you the owner, or where is he?" said the Cossack officer. "No, Sir: there he is, your excellency, your honour!" answered the Jew, pointing to Moses, who, in the meantime, alighted from the cart, and standing without his cap, made a low bow. "You rascals! you certainly are carrying contraband goods!" cried the gentleman in plain clothes. "How is it possible, Sir, that honest people should carry on a contraband trade?" said Moses, making a low bow: "May God keep us from doing any such thing! We, poor Jews, deal in tar and potash. Please to examine the loads." The gentleman dismounted from his horse, took an iron rod from his saddle, and a hammer from a leathern bag, and began to knock upon the casks; to listen with his ear to the sound produced; to probe with his rod the inside of the casks, and at last he knocked about the peasants and the carts, and, as if it were from chagrin, cried out: "There is nothing can be done! Go to the devil with you." During the search, the Cossack-officer remained on horseback, and attentively observed the proceedings of the gentleman in plain clothes: on seeing that all was right, he left us at rest, and went on his way with his detachment.

Moses could not contain his joy, and, when the Cossacks had gone out of sight, he clapped with his hands and sang out in a joyful key, repeating frequently, "*atrapirt! atrapirt!*" (caught.)

On arriving safe at the kartchma, the casks were unloaded into the storehouse, and the peasants were dismissed, being paid partly in money, but mostly in spirits, tobacco and herrings. After dining and sleep-

ing a while, Moses shut himself up in the storehouse with Josel, Khatzkel, and myself. I was quite astonished when he began to work at the casks. In the centre was tar or potash, but the two ends had double bottoms, and the space between them contained a variety of valuable goods, silk stuffs, linens, cambrics, laces, trinkets, perfumery, &c. They brought a brazier, stamps, black and red marking ink, and melted tin ; and while I blew the coals, Moses with his companions began to stamp the goods exactly as I afterwards saw it done at the custom-houses.

In the night-time there arrived some large Jewish waggons on which the goods were loaded, being now packed up in bales and cases, and sent home with Josel and Khatzkel : I with Moses went back in the same *breetchka* in which we had travelled to the karchma.

Moses, as has been already mentioned, had calculated upon being a fortnight absent, and only chanced to be a week, because his goods arrived from beyond the frontier sooner than usual. All was joy and rejoicing in his house, and Reefka for next day, which was Sabbath, baked tarts with honey and poppies ; and *kugel* (paste fried in goose-fat ;) roasted geese, boiled *lokshena* (milk broth thickened with home-made macaroni ;) and *tzimes* (a sort of hotch-potch made of carrots and honey, with fat and spices ;) and besides regaled me with some spoiled wine.

Moses notified to his factors and agents, that he wished to commemorate the fortunate issue of one of his undertakings by a good action. In lending money

on pledge, he usually took two per cent. a week : on this occasion, for the length of a whole month, he resolved to take only one and a half from poor people and those in straitened circumstances. His *factors* gave notice of this act of Moses' benevolence to all gamblers, spend-thrifts, and drunkards ; but Moses had to endure the remonstrances and even scoldings of his wife for this useless generosity, which in Reefka's opinion might bring on his ruin.

CHAPTER VIII.

Meeting of two great Lawyers, the one going out full, the other coming in empty—I leave the Jew.

WINTER came on, and with it, in Moses' house, an increase of activity, and to me of drudgery. Loads of goods, and travellers frequently put up with Moses, and I had to be in attendance in the strangers' apartments, the very same as had been occupied formerly by Meloveeden. Besides having to light the stoves, carry water, and sweep the rooms, the Jew ordered me to listen, behind the doors, to the subjects of the strangers' conversation, particularly if they were people in office. I was instructed to find out if they were in search of any one; if they had caught any thing; and to attend particularly if the words '*false money*,' or '*contraband*,' should be introduced. Although I was not aware of the real purport of these words, yet, feeling that some Jewish roguery must be at the bottom of this curiosity, I had no desire to serve the Jew faithfully, if he had not sometimes bribed me with the promise of a reward, and had not hunger constrained me to be an instrument of Jewish policy. But I was so wearied of this sort of life, that I resolved to flee on the first opportunity whithersoever my good luck should carry me. There was only one thing which detained me; an insufficiency of winter-clothing.

One day, when the sun began to leave the horizon, some carriages stopped in the market-place just opposite to Moses' house. He immediately ran to the street, and, approaching the principal carriage with a low bow, made an offer of his lodgings to the people in the carriage, cried up all the conveniences of his house, the cheapness of fodder and of all sorts of provisions, not forgetting to recommend himself as a man well known for his honesty and civility. The fair outside of Moses' house in comparison with others, was, I suppose, a more powerful argument than the landlord's words; and the carriages, to the great delight of the whole Jewish family, drew up at the door.

Reefka ran with her daughters to meet the gentry, while she drove me and the maid-servants to the strangers' apartments, to sweep away the dust, to clean the floors, and to clear off the table the fragments of an entertainment which Moses had been giving to the magistrates that same morning, having something to do with a charge of counterfeiting pawned goods. We had hardly got things in order, when the travellers came into the room. I stopped at the doors to get a look at them. First came a little, thin, pale-complexioned man, wrapt up in a fur great-coat. His eyes glared like those of a fox: with a single glance he examined all around him, and, passing into the other room, he immediately began to take off his coat. He was followed by a couple of boys, and as many girls, from ten to fourteen years of age, wrapped up and tied up like so many snails. The lady herself, also, a thin person, with a frowning look, in the mean while,

hopped about like a frog. After her followed a train of maid-servants, nurses, and footmen, with bundles and baskets. The first expression uttered by the lady to me and the house-maid was the words, "Get out of the way, you creatures!" We, returning the compliment with a bow and a courtesy, made our retreat, and, behind the door, repaid her in her own coin.

In the common room I learned that the passengers were travelling with hired horses to Moscow, from the government-town, where this gentleman, whose name was Scotinko, had filled the office of Procureur.* Candles were put on the table, the tea-urn † was heated, and Mr. Scotinko's cook began to make ready supper, while the gentleman himself put Moses in requisition to converse with him and answer questions about the news.

In about two hours after, when it was already dark, a *kibitka* ‡ drew up at the door, covered with matting and drawn by two horses. The landlord and landlady did not trouble themselves about meeting their guest. There entered a tall, stout, ruddy-faced gentleman, who, learning that the best rooms were already occu-

* Crown-advocate and public prosecutor.

† No one has lived in Russia without appreciating the benefits of the Russian tea-urn or *samovar*, which is not unlike the old English tea-urns in shape, but is heated with charcoal. When the teapot is placed on the top of the *samovar*, the strength of the tea is drawn off sooner and better than by any similar process in this country.

‡ A *kibitka* is a four-wheeled cart with a cover like the head of a cradle. There is generally a mat fastened to the head, which can be drawn over the rest of the *kibitka* when it rains.

pied, took possession of a little closet, usually tenanted by Judelia, the landlord's son. The whole baggage of this gentleman consisted of a small portmanteau and leathern pillow, which his man-servant, who was dressed in a bare sheepskin coat, carried under his arm.—The worn-out pelisse of the gentleman himself was a plain enough index of the contents of the portmanteau. Reefka treated his man with a dram, and learned that his master's name was Plootyagoaveetch, and that he was on his way from Petersburg to occupy the situation of Procureur in the very same town which Mr. Scotinko had left. A town-clerk who was at that time standing at the bar, drinking a dram of cordials, smiled very knowingly, and said—"There is a meeting of kites!"

Mr. Plootyagoaveetch, learning that his predecessor was in the house, immediately went to pay his respects to him. They seemed to like one another's company, for Scotinko invited Plootyagoaveetch to sup with him, and they spent the whole evening conversing together.

In the mean time, Plootyagoaveetch's man, having supped upon a bit of dry bread and quass,* seated himself beside the pot where Mr. Scotinko's servants were emptying out of the goblets the fragments of their master's lordly supper, joking together, and casting contemptuous looks on Plootyagoaveetch's man. When they learned that Plootyagoaveetch was going to occu-

* Quass is a sour fermented liquor, made from rye-malt, and is the usual drink of the common people in Russia. It is a very refreshing drink in the heats of summer.

py their master's place, they softened their tone, and treated the poor fellow with a dram. "What is your name, neighbour?" Scotinko's valet asked. "Pharaphont," answered Plootyagoaveetch's servant. "Look ye, Pharaphont," rejoined the valet, "learn to be deaf, and you will enjoy a perpetual carnival. Don't say 'aye' to petitioners, and allow nobody to enter gratis, but make them pay for a sight of your master, as they do for admittance to the dancing dogs. Why should you let them off?" "I would be glad to take, but will they give, is the query?" "To be sure they will, if you squeeze it out of them," answered the valet. "Learn to bawl lustily, '*not at home,*' '*engaged,*' '*indisposed,*' '*wishes to repose*'!" but when they ask, if they may return, might they not wait, might you not let him know, say, 'I might do every thing in the world, if you were only discreet!' " At this all Scotinko's servants burst into a roar of laughter. Pharaphont continued, "All that is very plausible; but what is to be done with gentlemen whom my master orders to be admitted without previous notice: I suppose that I must be more civil to them without expecting any returns." "Nonsense!" answered the valet, "But you must manage them in a different style. Make your bow regularly, open the doors with alacrity, go before them with a candle, and pay your compliments to them on holidays. Oh! brother Pharaphont, it is a happy life with the Procureur, but with the Governor a perfect paradise—the cup of bliss there overflows. We wept when we left the city. Our future lot we could not foresee; our past was good. But with you in Petersburg what

sort of a life do the servants of people in office lead ? ”

“ According to the place, brother,” answered Pharaohont, “ there are some of us who act the gentleman ; there are others who wipe away their tears with a naked hand. My master was only at the head of a table ;* but a small spoke in the wheel of state. He himself was glad to wrench a kopeek from right and wrong indifferently, but did not always succeed. It only happened that I would receive drink-money when my master sent me with the copy of a paper to a petitioner, or if there should be much business in the house, and the petitioner, having nothing to do, should turn and speak to us. But all that was very trifling : the oldest hands could make but a poor job of it.”

“ But now your master will be a great man,” added the valet, “ Oh Pharaphontushka, † Pharaphontushka, I would give the best feather in my cap to change places with thee ! But my master calls ; good bye.”

All this time I was warming myself at the fire, and hearing these dialogues, envied the condition of other servants. Considering that the Jew had no right to detain me, I resolved to beg one of the travelling gentlemen to take me with him.

Plootyagoaveetch on his return to his closet, called for the Jew, who, learning that he was going to occupy an important situation in the government, had al-

* There is an immense number of courts of law and public offices in St. Petersburg, and every department has what is called a *Kantzellaria* or Chancery attached to it. Each of these chanceries has a head-clerk or director, who sits at the head of the table to superintend the inferior clerks.

† A diminutive of endearment.

ready changed his manner towards him, bowed continually, and apologized to the new Procureur that he had no better room for him, but, to make amends for it, offered him whatever he liked, and whatever was in the house, gratis. Plootyagoaveetch, seated on his bedside, was smoking a large wooden pipe, and began to question the Jew. I was on the other side of the wooden partition, and, peeping through a seam, heard all that went on. "I say, Moses, tell me your mind freely, and perhaps I may be of service to you." The Jew took off his cap and made a bow. Plootyagoaveetch continued—"Here am I, going to occupy the place of Mr. Scotinko, who says that he has been dismissed for no offence, owing to the intrigues of evil-minded people, in consequence of his fearless and strict performance of his duty!" The Jew smiled knowingly and shook his head. Plootyagoaveetch continued—"Mr. Scotinko has quite frightened me by saying that it is a shocking situation, attended with no emoluments but the bare salary." There the Jew interrupted Mr. Plootyagoaveetch's speech, and exclaimed loudly, "What do you say? Salary! Oh Lord!" Plootyagoaveetch continued, "Mr. Scotinko says he has spent all his substance in his situation, and gone through all his father's and wife's property, and retires with the wreck of his ruined fortune, taking with him only the respect of honest people and peace of conscience." At these words the Jew burst into a fit of laughter, and continued it so long, putting his hands to his sides, that Plootyagoaveetch had to stop him. "*Hörsh tu,*" said the Jew, "Mr. Scotinko

speaks of his conscience ! but where has he met with it, if he has not picked it up on the road ? After this we may expect the wolves to turn guardians over the sheep, and the Jews to seek salvation in a monastery, and the landholders to prohibit their peasants from getting drunk on *vodky*. I will tell you, Sir, your honour, that I knew this Mr. Scotinko, when his father was a tanner, a skinner, while he, a poor clerk, ran about the streets without shoes or stockings, and stole *barankies* and *krendels** from the Jews. He is a native of the same town where I was born. Now, Mr. Scotinko is as rich as the devil, has moveable and immoveable property, gold and silver, and so much money, that, I dare say, he cannot count it. He has also received ranks and orders. Oh Lord, Lord ! Mr. Scotinko has made so good use of his opportunities, that no leech of the law ever sucked such a bellyful !” There the Jew recollected that it was with a candidate for the same office that he was speaking, and corrected himself—“Forgive me, Sir, your honour, but such a practitioner as Scotinko never was amongst us, and his conscience is all fudge : pure water runs through him, but the fishes stick. His situation is a magic wand for finding ready money. Don’t believe a word that he says. Mr. Scotinko lies even when he speaks the truth ; that is to say, he speaks the truth for the purpose of deceit. I will tell you one thing more—Scotinko was formerly as bare as a hawk ; but, in different governments, he has *counselled* and *pro-*

* See note to page 65.

cureured for himself so much riches, that, though he is like a dried lizard in appearance, below the skin he is as fat as a Siberian bear." "But why should he conceal himself so before me?" asked Plootyagoaveetch. "He wishes to pass for an honest man now, as is usual with rogues after they have made their fortunes. Forgive me, Sir," continued the Jew,—“I am only sorry,” said Plootyagoaveetch: “I would have liked to get a lesson from him, that is to say, to learn *service*.* “Why not,” answered Moses, “but you don’t want teachers for that: as soon as you arrive in the city, take for a *factor*† our Jew Isaac, who filled the same situation under Mr. Scotinko; he will assist you in every thing; will seek out petitioners for you; establish an understanding with the country practitioners, and borrow money for you, of course without bill or receipt for the same. I will give you letters to my relations and to Isaac: rely entirely upon them, and they will not deceive you; only assist us in our small Jewish transactions.” “With pleasure,” said Plootyagoaveetch, “you may depend upon me; make ready every thing for to-morrow and, in the meantime, good night.” Moses retired, and I crept out from behind the partition.

* Under the name of *sloojba* or service, is included the performance of all the various duties to which a man may be called, under government. It seems originally to have been applied to the performance of military duty, and owing to the organization of the other departments of the state being in Russia very much upon a military model, the transition was natural.

† The office of a Jewish *factor* in Poland (pronounced *factoar*) is that of general caterer for all the wants of the person who employs him.

Next day, Mr. Plootyagoaveetch set off very early, while Scotinko lay in bed on account of indisposition. The one made haste for fear of losing a single day of hay-making while the sun shone; the other had no cause to bestir himself—he had reached his goal.

Mr. Scotinko's little boys went to play under the roof of the stable-yard,* and I, having been accustomed to amuse myself with my master's children when I lived with Mr. Gologordoffsky, at their request, joined them in their frolics, assisted them to harness goats to a little carriage, made a swing for them of old rope harness, and joyfully put up with the buffeting and unpleasantness of being pelted with snow-balls.—Reefka called me from play to work, but the young masters Scotinko begged their father to order me to play with them, and the Jewess was obliged to submit. Although I was younger than Scotinko's children, I had much more sharpness than they; accordingly, without delay, I availed myself of their inclination towards me, and easily persuaded them to beg their parents to take me with them. After dinner, Mr. Scotinko called me to him.

“What brought thee into the Jew's service?” asked Mr. Scotinko. I related to him the story of Meloveeden's marriage and his departure for Moscow, and, falling at his feet, begged him to deliver me from the Jews, promising to serve him faithfully all my life.—Mr. Scotinko looked at his wife, and she gave a ver-

* The stable-yards attached to all the peasant's houses and hostelries, baiting houses, and the like in Russia, are partly roofed in; in Poland they are often entirely covered with a roof.

dict in my favour. Scotinko immediately called for Moses. "By what right dost thou hold this boy?" said he roughly. Moses hemmed thrice before he pronounced the first word of his answer. "His master, Meloveeden, was owing me money, and left in pawn effects with this boy." "And thou darest to take in pawn Christian subjects?" rejoined Scotinko. "Art thou aware of the ukaze which prohibits Jews from having Christians in their service? Art thou aware of the ukaze against usurers? Shew me this instant the deed by which you hold that boy—where is his passport?"* The Jew was frightened. "*Hörsh tu!*" said he in a low tone of voice. Then, making a most profound bow, he added—"I have no papers regarding him: the affair was settled by word of mouth." "And so you keep in your house people without passports," said Mr. Scotinko. "Hey! bring paper and ink; we will do your business immediately. I shall give in a declaration to the authorities here, and, on my arrival in Moscow, shall not fail to present a petition.† In the meantime I shall take the boy with myself on my own acknowledgement." "Your honour!" said the Jew; "is it worth our while to quarrel about such trifles? You wish to take the boy: take him in

* A passport, my readers are probably aware, is a *sine qua non* in Russia. The majority of the people being in a state of bondage, and the country embracing such a vast extent, escape from their masters would be easy and frequent, if it were not for the law, which imposes a very heavy fine for the harbouring of people not having a passport.

† All the affairs of which the courts of law take cognizance are brought before them in the form of a petition.

God's name. I shall make no obstacles ; only give me an acknowledgement, in order that I may be able to account for him to Meloveeden, when he asks. And that you may have no cause to complain of my behaviour, for your day's lodging here and for every thing which you have got in my house, I shall not charge a kopeek ; nay, over and above that, I shall put into your carriage a half-dozen of Tokay, the like of which you will not find within five hundred miles. Will that satisfy you ?" " Very well," said Scotinko ; " but has the boy any warm clothes for the road ?" " No, but I shall provide that immediately, and, by to morrow, every thing shall be in order." Mr. Scotinko sent us out of the room, and ordered me to make ready for the road.

" Damned rascal !" exclaimed Moses on meeting Rebecca. " This *khapoon* is taking away our Vanky." Reefka got into a violent passion, but Moses said something in their own jargon, which pacified her, and she patted me on the head. Moses took me up stairs into his own room, sat down in his arm-chair, and said ; " Vanky ! you are a good boy, and will surely not forget all the kindness which you have received from us ?" " What kindness ?" asked I. " How ! have we not given you meat and drink, and clothes ?" " But have not I worked from morning to night ?" " *Hörsh tu !* You know, every body must work. But tell me : you have not been ill treated here ?" " Not particularly well," answered I bluntly : " much drudgery and poor fare." " Don't slight us, Vanky : you might have fared worse with another. We have,

at least, never beaten you, while other masters make their people work without feeding them, and flog them into the bargain, without even giving them liberty to cry." "I cannot complain of you for that: you did not beat me," said I. "And therefore you ought to be grateful to us: here is a whole half-rouble piece to you for your services; and, if any one should question you about us, say that you neither saw nor heard any thing bad about us, and that we are poor people always pinched for money." "But the ducats, you know." "What ducats? The boy is crazed: you never saw any ducats with us." "Be it so," answered I, merely to get rid of the Jew. "You yourself have seen how we love the Christians, and assist them, sell spirits and grain on credit to the peasants, and give alms to poor people." "Dry bread," said I, "which you would throw to the cattle, if no beggar should make his appearance." "Vanky, Vanky, don't slight us! Here is another half-rouble piece to you. Isn't it true that we are good, compassionate, poor people?" I held my tongue. Moses put the money into my hand and kissed me, adding: "You will surely speak well of us?" "I will, I will;" said I, running down stairs to my new masters. The Jew bought me a second-hand sheepskin coat, a cap and gloves: Reefka gave me for the road a whole string of *barankies*, part of which I ate, and part gave away to Mr. Scotinko's sons' dogs in virtue of their authority over me. I passed the night in pleasant musings upon my adventures. The hope of meeting with my good Meloveeden kept up my spirits: I wished for

ing more in life. Next morning every thing was y for our departure. I was ordered to place my- behind the carriage, along with the valet, and we off.

CHAPTER IX.

Unexpected meeting—Change of life—My Aunt—My Education.

WE arrived, without any adventure, in Moscow. A house had been previously hired and furnished for our accommodation by Mr. Scotinko's house-steward, who had been dispatched some months previous. Mr. Scotinko had in Moscow many acquaintances among the people in office, who assembled at his house with their wives once a week to dinner, and twice a week to spend the evening at cards. Mr. Scotinko, soon after his arrival, engaged a French governor for his sons, and a French governess for his daughters. Besides that, they had teachers, who came into the house every day to give them lessons. My duty consisted in waiting upon the sons, keeping the school-room clean, and being in attendance during the lessons, to fulfil the different orders of the teachers and young gentlemen. Besides that, I waited at table during dinner, and executed the commissions of Madam Scotinko in different shops; also carried through the town her notes to her different friends, went to the Apothecary's shop for medicines, and fed the birds and lap-dogs which were favourites of my mistress. I was, what is called, chamber-boy. I wore a Cossack-dress, and went by the name of *Kazatchok*, (little Cossack.) Gifted by nature with a happy memory and quick perception, in

a few months, I learned from the cook to read and write Russian, and the first four rules of arithmetic; and, from being present during the lessons of my master's sons, in the course of half a year, I picked up a number of French and German words, and formed some acquaintance with geographical and historical names. The teachers, observing my docility and curiosity, examined me sometimes for their own amusement, concerning what I recollected of the lessons which I had heard, and explained to me what I did not understand. In this way I became a learned man among the lackeys. I was content with my lot, comparing it with my situation under the Jew; and, although the servants in general in Mr. Scotinko's house were kept and fed very indifferently, more from neglect than niggardliness, yet I had my own perquisites, which made up for other insufficiencies. I got the fragments of the children's breakfasts and suppers; got presents of money for gingerbread in the dressmakers' and apothecaries' shops, and in other places where I chanced to be on my mistress's business: besides that, I played at *orlenok*,* with the neighbouring boys and *vorreiters*,† and partly by good luck, partly by skill, almost always gained. I thus succeeded in acquiring for myself a small capital, which was sufficient to serve the purpose of allaying my hunger, and gratifying my palate. In this way I passed a year and a half in Mr.

* 'The little eagle,' a game at cards.

† The coachmen do not drive four-in-hand in Russia, but the two front horses are managed by a little boy called from the German '*vorreiter*,' literally '*fore-rider*.'

Scotinko's house at Moscow, without caring for the future, or anticipating any amelioration of my condition. My most flattering hopes went no farther than to occupy, in time, the situation of valet de chambre to one of my master's sons, or to return to my former benefactor Meloveeden, whose affability and goodness of soul had made a lasting impression on my heart and memory.

But fate ordered it otherwise. I was one day in a dressmaker's shop, waiting till some work should be finished for my lady. On a sudden there entered the shop, a lady, dressed very elegantly, who began to look at different articles which were for sale. Her eyes happening to fall upon me, she stopped and looked stedfastly with particular emotion. She again fell to examine the goods, but, as it were by some involuntary attraction, her eyes incessantly wandered towards me. At last, she could no longer get the better of her inward feeling, but came up to me. "Whose boy are you, my dear?" said the lady affably, patting me upon the cheek. "I myself don't know," said I. "I am, at present, a servant with Mr. Scotinko." "Who is this Mr. Scotinko?" "A rich gentleman who came to live in Moscow about a year and a half ago, and I entered his service on the way." "And so you are free, and not a serf?" "I really don't know whose I am: I was brought up in Byalo-russia in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky." At these words the lady interrupted my recital, hastily left the shop, and ordered me to follow her. She sent her footman to the carriage, as he stood waiting on the steps before

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the door, and there continued the dialogue with me. "What is your name?" "Ivan." "How old are you?" "I don't know." "You say that you were brought up in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky," said the lady: "but who are your parents?" "I don't know: I am an orphan." All this time, I stared in the lady's face, and observed that she blushed, and that her eyes were filled with tears. "Ivan!" said she, in a low tone of voice; then, after a short silence, she added: "Vanushka,* have not you a mark on your left shoulder?" "But how do you know that, Ma'am, that I have a great scar on my shoulder?" At these words, the lady put her handkerchief to her eyes, and remained for some time silent. At last she kissed me, asked where Mr. Scotinko lived, gave me a silver rouble, and ordering me not to tell any body of our meeting and of her questions, went into her carriage, saying, "We shall see one another soon."

My eyes followed the good lady to her carriage, and I returned to the shop. As I had an agreeable countenance in my childhood, I was frequently taken notice of by people who did not know me, particularly females, who would stop me on the street; but no similar adventure had made such a powerful impression upon me as this meeting. My heart beat strongly: the lady's beautiful features, and her black eyes, were continually present in my imagination; and her soft voice resounded in my ears. I returned home sad. All night I dreamed of the good lady; and sometimes

* A diminutive from Ivan.

awoke and fell a crying from grief and vexation, that I had not met with such kind masters. I wished to get into the service of that kind, affable lady ! Of other feelings I had no idea.

Next morning, at twelve o'clock, there stopped at our gate a coach and six, with three livery servants. One of the footmen came into the lobby, and begged to let Mr. Scotinko know, that prince Tchvanoff wished to speak with him upon very important business. Mr. Scotinko who was sitting in his morning-gown, immediately put on his coat, ordered the servants to request the prince to come in, and waited for him in the lobby. The prince was a man of about seventy years of age ; his face was covered with wrinkles and red spots ; his bald head was covered with a paste made of powder and pomatum ; and the remains of his grey hairs were formed into curls and tied with a queue. He could hardly move his legs, and his footmen took him under their arms with as much precaution as if he had been made of glass, and might be shivered to pieces by the smallest slip. Mr. Scotinko received the prince with low bows, and conducted him into the drawing-room ; but the prince wished to speak with him in private, and they entered into a closet where they remained about an hour. At last, Mr. Scotinko looked out of the closet and called me. I thought that he wanted me to fetch something, but what was my astonishment when Mr. Scotinko, pointing me out to the prince, said, " There he is ;" when the prince, stroking my head, and patting my cheeks, muttered something in a foreign language. " Vanky," said Mr. Scotinko to

me, "go immediately with his highness. I have no longer authority over you : here is your benefactor." I was so thunderstruck with these words, that I made no answer, but stood motionless. The prince rose, shook hands with Mr. Scotinko, and tottered towards the door, leaning upon my shoulder. In the lobby, Mr. Scotinko said to me : "Now, adieu, Vanya : you are no more my servant : go with his highness." The valet gave me my cap, and I went out with the prince into the street. I was almost frightened, when the prince ordered me to sit in the carriage alongside of himself. I was in such confusion, that I did not dare to lift my eyes or to take my breath. Fortunately the prince was silent all the way, and slumbered. My heart fluttered, when we halted beside an elegant house. Ignorance of one's lot occasions sometimes more uneasiness than real misfortune.

We had hardly entered the rooms which glittered with gold, bronze, and marble, and were adorned with carpets and pictures, when the prince sat down on a sofa, and ordered the house-steward to be sent for. I, the mean while, stood at the doors, and looked upon every thing with a curious eye. The steward entered. "Take this boy," said the prince, "and go with him to a tailor and sempstress ; buy for him the best sort of linen, and fashionable clothes for his time of life ; dress him as neat as a doll, and as fine as a prince ; get his hair cut, wash him, clean him ; and after doing all this as well as possible, take him to Adelaida Petrovna. Dost thou hear ?"—"I hear, your highness." "Let every thing be ready by six o'clock : I shall

myself be at her house in the evening." The steward beckoned to me, and I followed him.

Without farther questions he seated me beside himself on a hackney-droshky, and took me to a tailor. Here he left me, ordering the tailor to execute immediately the prince's commission, and saying that he would come back for me in a few hours. The tailor's wife went out and bought linen for me. The tailor sought out a beautiful ready-made jacket and trowsers of violet-coloured kerseymère, with gilded buttons. The shoemaker brought shoes for me. My hair had been cut in a circular form, in the old Russian fashion.* The hair-dresser cut it in the prevailing mode, and put it into curls. The landlady soon returned with linen, and with an embroidered shirt-neck. She herself washed me, dressed me, and could hardly keep from kissing my rosy cheeks. I scarcely knew myself when I looked into the mirror, and perceived with inward satisfaction that I was prettier than the young Gologordoffskys, Scotinkos, and all the boys whom I had seen in their houses. The house-steward soon returned, and was likewise struck with my metamorphosis. We again mounted a hackney-droshky, and drove to the place pointed out by the prince. I asked no questions, being quite absorbed in admiration of my clothes.

* This operation is often performed among the peasants by clapping a wooden bowl upon the head of the person to be operated upon, and clipping all round by the brim of the bowl. In addition to this, among the Russian methodists, or *starovayries*, (old believers), in some provinces, they clip a considerable space round the crown quite bare.

On arriving at a little neat wooden house, we stopped, and the steward led me by the hand along with him. A footman opened the door into the dining-room; and I almost fainted with joy when I saw the very same lady who, the day before, had questioned me at the dressmaker's. The lady herself screamed for joy, threw her arms about my neck, kissed me, and leading me into another room, dismissed the steward. When we remained alone, the lady sat down on a sofa, seated me beside her, ordered me to take off my jacket, and, on examining the mark on my left shoulder, fell a crying. I also cried, thinking that the good lady had some cause for her grief. "Vanya," said she to me, "you will now be no more a servant. You are my own nephew, my sister's son. You ought to call me aunt, and not to tell any body what you were before. You will now be a young gentleman, exactly such as the sons of Gologordoffsky and Scotinko."—"Oh no, aunt!" said I, "I want to be much better than they. They behave very ill to poor boys and servants, raise disturbances, cheat their parents, and don't learn their lessons." In place of any answer my aunt kissed me. "Do you want any thing, Vanya," asked she. "I am hungry, aunt." She rang the bell, and a maid servant appeared, whom she ordered to give me something to eat, telling her who I was, and ordering her to shew me into a separate room, where all was to be arranged for my comfort.

My aunt, Adelaida Petrovna, was a woman of thirty years of age, but to appearance was much younger. She was a beauty in the full sense of the

word. Her black hair, which was soft as down, gave a particular shading to her delicately white face. A fresh rosy hue adorned her cheeks. The lines of her countenance were regular, and enlivened with a sweet smile and expression of goodness of heart. Her black eyes, rendered more expressive by long eyelashes and finely-arched eyebrows, drew upon them the gaze of the by-stander, like the attraction of the magnet for iron. Her full rosy lips, and teeth than which nothing could be whiter, were an irresistible temptation to kiss her charming little mouth. She was of a tall form and elegant figure. In a word, my aunt's exterior was enchanting; but her affable and agreeable behaviour added charms to her beauty. She spoke French and Italian, played exceedingly well on the piano-forte, and sang like a nightingale. She lived very genteelly. Her house was comfortable, and well furnished. She had in her service two footmen, two maid servants, a man-cook, a coachman, and a porter for dirty work. The stable contained a pair of good horses. There was plenty of every thing in the house. She had many visitors, but very few of them females; and they consisted only of some actresses and foreigners. Once a-week she had a musical *soirée*, when there was an assembly of virtuosos and connoisseurs, for the most part elderly gentlemen. Middle-aged people and young men came only when any of their relations brought them, and that was very seldom. Besides this, my aunt had, every day, guests at tea, and some to dinner and supper. Prince Tchevanoff was a daily visitor, and held in a manner the

rank of *papa* in the house. The servants were ruled by him as if he were their master; and my aunt obeyed him in every thing, though sometimes against her will, as I observed. Sometimes the prince quarrelled with my aunt when they were alone, and she always shed tears upon such occasions, and would even at times fall into fits. Then the prince would kiss her hands, beg forgiveness; and friendship would be re-established on its former footing. Only, I observed clearly and understood, that the prince's visits were not agreeable to my aunt: she always made wry faces when his carriage drew up at the door, and always had a pleasant smile on her countenance when she drove out along with the prince.

My aunt was one of those women who regard beauty as of the greatest value, and dress as the most indispensable requisite of life; and her principal gratification was derived from the admiration of the men, and the envy of the women. The greatest part of her time was spent in contriving how she might dress, and appear in public, with all the splendour of beauty and wealth. Besides, her favourite occupation, music, she made use of only as a cover, to bring to her house people who moved in good society, who merely, on that account, passed themselves off for amateurs of that art. She was the widow of an Italian named Baritono, who had at one time been a teacher of music and singing. I knew nothing of the origin of my aunt, and she never spoke with any one either about her own relations, or about the place of her birth. She called herself a Russian, and went occasionally

to the Russian church to morning and afternoon prayers,* but only on the principal holidays. At the time when I became an inmate of her house, she was upon particularly friendly terms with a young gentleman of scanty fortune, who held some petty situation under government, Semen Semenovetch Plaiseereen. He executed all my aunt's commissions, squired her to the theatre, to concerts, and promenades, and would pop into the house several times in the course of the day, but always when old prince Tchvanoff was not there. Plaiseereen would only sometimes on the musical *soirees* address himself to my aunt in the presence of the prince, and would then behave towards her with a distant respect, as if there was no particular intimacy between them, but only a musical acquaintance. My aunt's other confidant was a French abbot, Pretatout, a man of about five-and-forty, of an agreeable exterior, and very pleasant company. He was the domestic friend of prince Tchvanoff, and lived with him in the capacity of toad-eater; received a salary, or, properly speaking, a pension, for the education of his son (who was already in the service at Petersburg); kept the prince's library in order, looked after the pictures, and was his agent in all private transactions. Abbé Pretatout was likewise almost every day with

* There are four services in the Russian Church every day in the week, viz.—The *Za-ootrenoy*, at about four o'clock in the morning; the *Rano-obeydny*, at six; the *Pozdno-obeydny*, at nine; the *Vetcherny*, at three in the afternoon in winter, and four in summer. In addition to these, when next day is a holiday, and every Saturday evening, there is a fifth service, at seven o'clock, called the *Vsey-notchny*.

my aunt, but never met with Plaiseereen. My aunt observed the greatest order in all her affairs, and a particular time was fixed for every visit. Her house had four entrances, each from a separate room and a separate side: one from the street, another beside the gateway, a third from the backdoor, and a fourth from the garden. The visitors could come and go, if my aunt wished it, without meeting one another. All who visited my aunt, appeared strongly attached to her; but I was much astonished that the very same gentlemen who were so very friendly with her at home, would not make a bow to her on the street or in the theatre, when they were in company with other females, but would always turn aside, as if they did not observe her. The females would look at her with a smile or a scowl, and on doing so would almost always whisper between themselves. But my aunt was so good that nothing excited her anger. She was very affable to her servants, and only sometimes got into a passion with her chambermaid, when, in assisting her to dress, she put any thing awry, either involuntarily or intentionally. But she always made up for any little crossness of temper with kind words and presents after it was over, and, on that account, the chambermaid was more attached to her than the other servants were. In a word, my aunt was loved by all who knew her; and I, though I knew her last of all, loved her more than all, and was myself the first object of her tenderness and care.

I had a room for myself, with a clean bed, and a chest of drawers filled with clothes and linen. My

aunt and her maidservant fed me and caressed me from morning to night. Every day my aunt took me out to walk along with her, and praised loudly my personal appearance. All her acquaintances and friends caressed me, and made me presents of confections and toys. Three months had elapsed since my change of condition, and I had no remembrance of it. Sometimes I would dream of my former situation; then I would awake with a scream, and fall a crying bitterly, dreading a return of the iron age of my childhood. I would always repeat my frightful dreams to my aunt, who comforted me with the assurance that my misfortunes would never be renewed. At last, I gradually began to forget my former condition; but that is pardonable in the years of childhood. How many grown-up people forget in prosperity what they were before! and, what is worse than that, avoid people who were the means of drawing them out of poverty! I was not like them, at least in that respect, for I adored my aunt.

One day Plaiseereen came very early in the morning, and not at his usual time. Coffee was served up, and my aunt sent for me to come into the room.—“Vanya,” she said, “it is time for you to be learning something; according to my calculation, you must now be at least twelve years old. Semen Semenoveetch has sought out teachers for you. You will have to learn French and German, to play on the piano-forte and dance. Do you wish that?” “Why should not I, aunt, if it is agreeable to you.” “Recollect that, if you learn your lessons, you will be always as well

dressed as you are at present, and have always a good dinner; but, if you learn nothing, you may be again unfortunate." Trembling seized upon me at these words, and I said with a tremulous voice—"I will be very attentive to my lessons, aunt!" "Very well," answered she, and turning to Plaiseereen, added, "I have told you already that he must be provided with a family name;* this day must decide it; consider." Plaiseereen thought a little, walked several times up and down the room, and said, "You told me, Adelaida Petrovna, that you recognized your nephew by his astonishing resemblance to his deceased father, and that your conjectures were confirmed by a scar which remained upon his shoulder from the cauterizing of a wen in his infancy. "Exactly so," replied my aunt. "And, therefore, your nephew, should be called 'Vejeeghen' (the seared); this characteristic appellation will keep up in his memory the fortunate change in his life from that mark, and ——" My aunt did not allow him to finish the sentence. "Excellent, excellent," exclaimed she; "henceforth Vanya shall be called Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen. Do you hear, Vanya?" "I hear." "Now, what is your name?" "Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen." "Very well," said my aunt, "but what are you?" "The nephew of Adelaida Petrovna Baritono." "Could not be better,"

* There are two surnames used amongst people not in the very lowest class of society; the patronymic ending in *off* or *veetch*, which is the only surname usual among the peasants, and the family name which generally originates from the profession or some peculiar quality or habit of the first of the family to which it has been applied.

said my aunt. "Now, recollect that your father was a gentleman in an official situation, and that his name was Ivanoff; besides, he amassed for himself a decent fortune, but unfortunately ruined himself and died in the time of your infancy; but your mother, my sister, also a lady by birth, who married for love, died the year after she brought you into the world. As your father left no relations, it is all the same to you, whether you call yourself Ivanoff or Vejeeghen." I held my tongue and listened. "Now, Vanya, go into your own room," said my aunt; "to-morrow your lessons will begin." Plaiseereen, who loved a jest, made a bow to me, adding, "*A revoir*, Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen; I beg you will love and reverence your godfather." My aunt smiled and said, "I allow you to love him, but I forbid you to follow his example, otherwise you will deserve the appellation of a *mauvais sujet*." This French expression I knew long ago, as Gologordoffsky's and Scotinko's children were so called to their face by their teachers; therefore, as in duty bound, I without hesitation replied—"Don't be afraid, aunt; I shall endeavour not to resemble Semen Semenoveetch."

Next day, the teachers made their appearance. The first, a German, Mr. Biersaufer, an old snuffy fellow, with a pimpled face on which flourished the laurels of Bacchus; another, a young Frenchman, Monsieur Felix, a cidevant journeyman in a pomatum manufactory, who, by teaching beginners, had taught himself to become a teacher and governor. Mr. Schmiernoten, also a German, teacher of music and singing, although he was

well acquainted with the theory of music, played so wretchedly on the piano-forte, and squalled so loudly and unharmoniously, that all in the house stopped their ears whenever he took it into his head to sing or play after a lesson. I learned to dance at a dancing-school kept by a lame theatrical dancer who had broken his leg in performing the part of some prodigy in a *grand ballet*.

My language-masters followed quite opposite methods. When I had learned the letters, the German applied himself to beat into my head the grammar rules; while the Frenchman, paying little attention to the grammar, fell to work, tooth and nail, and endeavoured to cram me with as many words and phrases as possible. As in our house they jabbered French continually, and almost all the visitors, vying with one another, examined me touching my progress in the French language, I very soon learned to chatter it myself, and completely to understand every thing that was said, to the great delight of my aunt. When I already understood what I read, Monsieur Felix began to teach me the grammar, that is to say, he told me the meaning of genders, substantives, and adjectives; and taught me how to apply the articles, and conjugate active verbs. In the course of a year, I had already learned to talk French almost as well, and to say the least, almost as boldly as any of our acquaintances; but in the German language I had scarcely reached the declensions. I played on the piano-forte much better than my master, and sung so agreeably, that, on our musical evenings, I would perform a solo. Dancing

was a pleasure to me ; in the course of a year, I learned not only the waltz and quadrille, but minuet, allemande, matadore, and all the fashionable hops of the day. In the fourteenth year of my age, and after one year's schooling, I had become in the words of my aunt, '*un jeune homme accompli*'—a chatterer, free and easy, in my manners and even forward : all these qualities were called marks of genius. It was proposed in a council of my aunt's friends, to send me to a first-rate boarding-school, in order to make me a *learned man*. Prince Tchvanoff took upon himself to defray the expence of my education. But, as my aunt wished on no account to be separated from me, on my name's day,* when, according to my aunt's computation I had completed my fourteenth year, I was enrolled as a day-boarder in the didactic establishment of Monsieur Lebrilliant, where children of the first Russian families were sent to be educated. I had several books bought for me, got a present of a rich portfolio, and began seriously to apply to my studies, seeing that my pro-

* Christian names are universally given after that of some saint in the Russian calendar, and the day of their patron-saint is in general kept there with greater éclat than birth days are held in this country : visits are paid and presents given by acquaintances and relations, and the person whose name's day is celebrated, gives an entertainment if his or her means will afford it. The police officers, especially, seldom forget to let all the householders in their ward know when their name's day occurs. Among the country people, the priests follow the rules of the church, and give the children the name of the saint who presides over the day of their birth ; but among the other ranks who can afford to pay a suitable fee, they will anticipate or go back to a holiday, in some cases two or three months distant.

gress in the sciences was a source of gratification to my aunt, and of presents to myself.

I had promised my aunt that I should be better than the young Gologordoffskys and Scotinkos ; but, as the same effects are the consequences of the same causes, over-indulgence led me into the very same vices which I had before hated ; I acquired a haughty manner, and fancied myself superior to every body. I was refused nothing, and this acted as a whet to my wishes, illustrating a well known law of human nature. The grown-up boys in our boarding-school, (copying the domestic occupations of their parents,) played at cards with one another, treated one another with breakfasts, and he amongst us who could spend most, enjoyed the greatest respect from his companions. When I had not money enough for my diversions, I feigned indispensable wants, not daring to reveal to my aunt what we did by stealth ; asked money for books, paints, compasses and paper, and thus learned to lie and cheat. My aunt and her friend gratified my wishes without contradiction, and thus I grew to regard it as an unpardonable sin in a servant, if he hesitated to execute my orders, and by these means acquired a haughty manner of demeaning myself towards servants, and became arrogant and capricious. With my poor school-fellows I was rude ; with the rich, familiar—reckoning myself richer than the former, and better than the latter. I neither feared nor respected my teachers and governors, because the proprietor of the boarding-school, fearing lest he might lose the patronage of Prince Tchvanoff, and my aunt's presents, flattered me,

looked through his fingers at my romping, and paid no attention to the complaints of the teachers. I thus involuntarily grew exactly like those children who before appeared to me so intolerable. Besides, I lost all inclination to learn, my head being always taken up with something else. But fortunately my uncommon memory and ready comprehension supplied the place of attention: hearing the lessons in the regular routine, and never casting an eye upon them at any other time, I knew better than all the rest, whatever tasks were given out in the boarding-school, with the exception of mathematics. To learn that, fixed application, repetitions and copyings are necessary; and as that was not at all to my taste, I resolutely declared to my aunt, that I had no inclination nor capacity for mathematics. She, after consulting with Plaiseereen and the Abbé Pretatout, withdrew me from the mathematical lessons, and all my progress in this science was confined to arithmetic.

CHAPTER X.

Boarding-school Examination—A Tempter—New friend of my Aunt—Symptoms of first Love—Departure from Moscow.

THE age of child-hood passes away rapidly. I grew up to be a stripling in my aunt's house, learned my lessons, kicked up dusts in the boarding-school, and had not time to observe what was passing at home : therefore I shall say nothing about it. The time approached of the usual show-trial in the boarding-school, and of dismissal from the upper class in which I was one of the best scholars. The oldest of us was not more than seventeen years of age ; but we all thought ourselves qualified to fill the first situations in the empire, and lamented the time which we lost, not in learning, but which might have been spent in serving for an officer's rank.* With impatience we waited for the examination, of which notices had been sent to the parents for two weeks previous. The preparations were begun. Each teacher had so many questions and answers given him, in which he had to drill us every day, and to accustom us, by certain conventional marks, to know what answers to give, in case any of the by-standers should put questions, for which

* In the Russian army no commissions are given till the candidate has served a certain time in the ranks ; unless he has previously held a commission in another service.

ready-made answers were not at hand. For instance, all the buttons on the coat and waist-coat of the teacher of languages, denoted the parts of speech and the grammar rules. All their motions had a particular meaning. The nose of the professor of fortification was equivalent to a bastion, his mouth to the ditch of a fortress, his teeth to palisades, his chin to the glacis, his eyes to the fleches, his neck to a *tete du pont*, &c.—The head of the teacher of geography represented the universe. The crown of his head denoted the zenith, his chin, the nadir; his cheeks the polar circles, his nose the ecliptic, his skin the first meridian, his mouth the ocean, his eyes the fixed stars, &c. &c. Besides the teachers, the scholars were also taught how to assist their comrades by means of signs. M. Lebrilliant prepared certificates for every scholar, to be presented to their parents, relations, and guardians. A good or bad certificate of behaviour and acquirements did not depend on the progress and morals of the scholars, but on the rank, wealth, liberality and degree of attachment shewn by the parents and relations to the children. He, from whom M. Lebrilliant had the greatest expectations, received the best certificate; but, as it was not to be supposed that there would be no triflers and idlers, the bad certificates were allotted to those children whose parents were absent, to orphans, for whom their guardians, as usual, cared but little, and to two poor boarders whom Monsieur Lebrilliant educated, out of charity as he said, though perhaps more with a view to get a name for magnanimity and generosity. All the scholars who were to get rewards,

(bought, of course, with their own money), and those who were to receive good certificates, were told beforehand, by way of secret, and instructed to invite as many of their relations and acquaintances as possible. At length, when all the preparations were completed, began the show.

The hall was crowded with visitors, public functionaries, ladies, and people who were on friendly terms with Monsieur Lebrilliant. The exhibition was opened with a speech in the French language, delivered by me with the greatest confidence. This oration was composed by Abbé Pretatout, and corrected and improved by all the teachers of the school, including even the teacher of calligraphy. For the preference shewn to me, my aunt presented Madame Lebrilliant with a piece of silk stuff, and some *arsheens** of lace which she had got in a present from Prince Tchvanoff. The trial of the grown-up scholars went on in a perfectly satisfactory manner—thanks to the conventional signs. Many of the visitors who were friends of our teachers, gave us difficult questions, the answers to which we knew before, and inexperienced parents were astonished at our acquirements. But there were among us some impenetrable blockheads, whom it was impossible to teach their exercise, or to beat into their thick skulls either the ready-made questions and answers, or the conventional signs, and this occasioned some very strange misunderstandings and mistakes. For instance,

* The *arsheen* is the Russian yard, and measures about 28 inches.

the son of a head-secretary* was asked—‘What sort of occupation or profession turns over the most ready money in the empire?’ In vain the teacher of statistics put his hand into his side-pocket, which, by previous agreement, denoted trade; the youth, by having heard from his parents reflections upon the same subject, and thinking that he was giving a pertinent answer, said—“Law-suits!” The company could not help laughing, and the father of the youth concealed his face with his handkerchief, as if he was wiping off the perspiration. Another scholar, the son of a rich and haughty lawyer was asked, ‘What are active verbs in the Russian language?’ He held his peace. His father, getting out of humour, said to him: “Vanya, you surely have not forgotten here what you learned before you left home?” Some one whispered into Vanya’s ear, and he answered—“Our active verbs are *lgat* and *brat*,” (to lie and grasp). This again raised a burst of laughter from all the corners of the room, and the proud lawyer looked blue with vexation. Mr. Lebrilliant, to avoid farther perplexities, took the examination into his own hands. He did the business so neatly, that all answered admirably, to the great satisfaction of the mammas and aunts. Here are some

* The person called the *secretary*, who is always a professional lawyer, in most cases leads the judges by the nose. Nominally his business is confined to the engrossing of the decisions and drawing up the minutes, but suitors are so well aware of his real influence, that prudent people take care to secure his good opinion, cost what it may, when the matter in dispute is worth contending for.

specimens of Monsieur Lebrilliant's pedagogical talents. "How do you call the principal city in Spain?" asked Monsieur Lebrilliant, "Isn't it Madrid?" "Madrid," answered the scholar. "Very well; but on what river does it lie? Isn't it on the Mansanares?" "Madrid lies on the river Mansanares," answered the scholar quickly and loudly. "Very well, very well, sit down." "Now tell me, you Master M. M. is it with justice that the Volga is called the largest river in European Russia?" "The largest river in European Russia is the Volga," answered the scholar in a trice. "Very well, excellent. Tell me master N. N. who was the first Roman emperor, when Augustus took upon himself the first imperial dignity?" "Augustus," answered the scholar. "Very well," said Monsieur Lebrilliant. In this way all the scholars gave satisfactory answers to Monsieur Lebrilliant's questions, and tender-loving parents agreed unanimously, that their children were taught excellently at the boarding-school, and, if they fell sometimes into inaccuracies, it was entirely owing to other people not knowing how to examine them with so much tact as the learned Monsieur Lebrilliant.

The examination lasted two hours; after this, the rewards and certificates were distributed by sound of trumpets and cymbals, and we went away with our parents. The gentlemen, that is to say, friends of the proprietor of the boarding-school and of the teachers, who assisted them to examine us on the plan of conventional signs, and the humble domestic friends of the rich parents, remained to dine with Monsieur Lebril-

liant, for which, the day previous, baskets had been sent with wine from several houses. For three successive days there was no teaching in the boarding-school, because the teachers needed repose after their exertions. Although I had already gone through the course of studies pursued in the boarding-school, yet, by the advice of Abbé Pretatout, I was to continue to take lessons till it should be considered what to do with me. I overheard from the other room the reasons given by the Abbé for this measure. "Let Vanya go to the boarding-school," said the Abbé. "It will cost you nothing. You know the prince pays for all. For the sciences he does not want it ; but, if kept at home, he might learn what he should not know.—Youth is full of curiosity and meddling, and our Vanya was always knowing and quick-sighted beyond his years. Do you understand me ? We will soon find some employment for him." "Be it so as you propose," answered my good aunt ; "I am ready to do any thing, from love to him."

As soon as my class companions left the boarding-school, I reckoned myself before all the rest, and entirely left off learning. During school-hours I employed myself in reading books, which we procured from a general acquaintance of the boarding-school, Luke Ivanoveetch Vorovaateen. He was not acquainted with my aunt, and my comrades introduced me to him. Luke Ivanoveetch lived opposite to our boarding-school, and was on friendly terms not only with M. Lebrilliant, but with all the teachers ; and on that account, when the lessons were over, they

permitted the scholars to go to his house, and to remain there sometimes till midnight. Luke Ivanoveetch taught us to play at all the different games of cards, faro and shtoss ; * permitted us to smoke tobacco, treated us with wine, punch, and spirits, and entertained us with stories of his love-adventures. He had a small library of prohibited books ; and every thing obscene which fell into his hands, both in prose and verse, was copied into his small collection of manuscripts. Some portfolios were filled with engravings and drawings, which he certainly would never have ventured to shew to any body but to inexperienced youths, and to friends who were as great reprobates as himself. In his conversations with us, he never failed to laugh at all the civil and religious duties of mankind, at the obligation of relative ties, and the respect due to parents ; in a word, at every thing which good people regard as sacred. Luke Ivanoveetch kept a steady eye on our inclinations, gradually excited our passions, inflamed our desires, and unceasingly insisted that the chief end of man is pleasure, and that in aiming at any particular end, the shortest and surest methods are always the best. According to the rules of Mr. Vorovaateen, there was only one duty of children to parents, and that was, to personate in their presence the character which pleased them best. Sincerity towards parents and old people in general, he treated as a fault and a folly. Vorovaateen cloaked his hellish rules under the denomination of *the new philosophy* ; and under the name of *the laws of*

* A species of faro.

nature and *the rights of man*, he sowed the seeds of unbelief in inexperienced minds, and made us think that we were on a footing with the brutes. His ideas pleased us exceedingly, because we found in them every thing which flattered our selfish propensities, and shewed them off in a favourable point of view. We regarded ourselves as philosophers of the eighteenth century, and all who did not think like us and Mr. Vorovaateen, we called barbarians and ignoramuses.—Vorovaateen knew all the scandalous anecdotes of the best families, and by exposing the nakedness of the parents before the eyes of their offspring, he obliterated from their hearts every trace of attachment and respect towards their elders. He lived upon play and all sorts of manœuvring; lent money to the heirs of rich people, gained it back from them at cards, traded in bills, * and things which he bought upon credit in the shops, and acted in the capacity of pimp and general agent for intrigues, both to old and young, men and women.

All the town knew Vorovaateen; and although he did not shew himself in decent families on days when they had company, he was very frequently applied to for advice and assistance by people of rank and fortune.—Luke Ivanoveetch was about forty years of age,

* The bills of the different classes of the nobility and gentry are a common article of speculation among monied people in Moscow not engaged in trade, and are to be bought and sold at all different prices, from ninety-nine $\frac{1}{2}$ cent. discount to five or ten $\frac{1}{2}$ cent. according to the credit of the acceptor: they, in some measure, make up for the want of a stock exchange in that ancient capital.

of a small figure and thin habit of body. His hair was reddish, his face pale, covered with wrinkles and carbuncles, the primary consequences of debauchery. He always winked with his eyes, and this suspicious manner of his was apt to excite an unfavourable impression against him. Vorovaateen boasted that he had already initiated a whole generation in the rules of his new philosophy; and, in reality, the greatest scapegraces and debauchees in the metropolis had been his friends from their early years. But not one of them escaped from under his wing gratis; he assisted them to squander their money, and was the first to take advantage of their ruin. Upright people called Vorovaateen a *demon*, young people called him a *jolly fellow*, and inexperienced youth, as already mentioned, esteemed him a *philosopher*. In the journals of the police he was known under the names of a *false player* and a *jobber*.

Luke Ivanoveetch attached himself particularly to me, prophesying that I would be a great philosopher, and attain the highest degree of riches and renown. He never in my presence spoke ill of my aunt, knowing my affection for her; only he forbade me to tell her any thing about our acquaintance, alleging that he was a personal enemy of prince Tchvanoff and of Plaiseereen, who might give her a bad character of him, and she, from female credulity, might put an end to our intimacy. Vorovaateen, besides, gave me money for play and for my other wants, and called me by no other name than his younger brother. I was a sort of second landlord in his lodgings; came when-

ever I liked, did whatever I chose, and, although he was not at home, gave orders to his servants. I treated my companions at his expense, and disposed of his property as if it was my own. Is it to be wondered that this behaviour on the part of Vorovaateen made me believe that he loved me merely for my personal qualities? This very idea attached me to him. I even prided myself upon this preference. We had no secrets between us, and, at his request, I told him my adventures, the miseries of my childhood, my meeting with my aunt, and at last shewed him the lucky mark by which she was convinced that I was her nephew. I thought that, at the time of my disclosure, Vorovaateen loved me still more tenderly. He was the first to whom I laid myself open in that respect.

In the mean time, there appeared very frequently among my aunt's visitors, a personage who had occupied an important situation in Petersburg, which having resigned, he had come to live in Moscow, in order to enjoy the *otium cum dignitate* afforded him by a fortune acquired (no matter how) during his long service. Mr. Grabeelen was about fifty years of age, but was lusty and vigorous beyond his years. He was proud, daring in his words and actions, capricious, and by his behaviour frequently brought tears into my aunt's eyes. He made himself completely master of the house, stationed there his own servants, and forbade my aunt to receive any visitors without his permission, except some elderly musicians. Grabeelen would not hear, nor turn about, nor make any

reply, if he was not styled 'your excellency.' Semen Semenovetch and Abbé Pretatout durst not shew their faces in our house, and prince Tchvanoff was the only man who came on the old footing. My aunt called him her godfather and benefactor, and Grabeelen did not dare to oppose the prince, but, on the contrary, seized the opportunity to establish a close friendship with him. The two old men would spend a great deal of time in talking upon politics : my aunt mean while would slip away to her neighbour's, a female friend, who lived in the other half of the house, where she was sure to find Semen Semenovetch or some other of her former acquaintances. The affairs of the empire, in which the old men had no longer any participation, would interest their attention to such a degree, that, in the heat of their disputes and arguments, they did not trouble their heads about my aunt's absence. At any rate, from the time of Grabeelen's appearance, every thing was turned topsy-turvy in the house : the musical *soirees* were given up, and in general a sort of monotony reigned in place of the former cheerfulness. I was particularly affected by the change. Grabeelen behaved to me very superciliously, hardly deigned to look upon me, quarrelled me for every immodest word and for every free action, and did not like that, according to my former practice, I should mingle in the conversation. I accordingly shunned his presence, and, under the pretence of occupation at the boarding-school, almost lived with Vorovaateen.

Vorovaateen introduced me at the houses of some

of his acquaintances, where, without farther ceremony, I was invited to dine, sup, and dance. I visited more frequently than others, an intimate female acquaintance of his, who had a pretty daughter. Matrena Ivanovna Shtoseen, a widow of five and thirty, cheerful and volatle, loved the amusements of society, gaiety and card-playing. She had an extensive circle of acquaintances among the clerks in public offices, and the small country-gentry. Her husband, in his lifetime, had held a lucrative office, and after his death, she succeeded to a house and considerable property. Almost every evening, a number of visitors, both gentlemen and ladies, used to assemble at her house, to play at cards and talk about affairs in general. They began with round games, but ended always with faro.—Groonya,* her daughter, who was in her fifteenth year, passed for a beauty. She was of a pensive turn, spent the greater part of her time alone in her own room, reading sentimental romances, and was profoundly versed in the passion of the young Werter and *la nouvelle Eloise*. I had an opportunity of conversing with her very frequently, when her mother superintended the marking at cards or was taken up at faro. I very soon got upon friendly terms with Groonya, and after some disputes upon morals and Philosophy, we agreed to open a correspondence with one another upon sundry philosophical subjects, in order to perfect ourselves in the French language and in wisdom. But wisdom does not love to mingle in the affairs of

* A contraction for Agraphena.

young gentlemen with young ladies. Our philosophical letters soon assumed a tone similar to that of the affectionate Saint Preux and the tender-hearted Julia, and, without knowing the why or the wherefore, we fell desperately in love with one another, and meditated schemes of future bliss. Of course Voro-vaateen was my confidant in this love-affair. He circumvented me, inflamed my unexperienced heart with hopes and descriptions of the happiness of being loved, and advised me how to behave towards Groonya.

The elasticity of the young mind gathers fresh strength under difficulties, which older and more experienced people give up all hopes of surmounting. It is only amidst gratifications and indulgences that the young mind loses its strength, and is induced to rest on its leading-strings. But youth, left to its own resources, either fails in the attempt or exerts all its powers of action with uncommon vigour. I have already mentioned that I was regarded from my very childhood as wise beyond my years. My physical constitution was also developed at an extremely early age, in the midst of all the comforts of life ; so that at seventeen, I looked like a youth of twenty. The passions boiled strongly within my breast, a thousand desires agitated my thoughts, but no one passion ruled me exclusively. Sometimes by looking at a grandee of state with his stars and ribbands, or at a general with a splendid uniform, I was filled for some days with ambition, and formed plans for attaining honours. Another time, a brilliant equipage, rich dress and elegant house, extinguished all sparks of ambition, and

begat a desire of wealth. I was buried in contemplating how I might acquire an immense fortune in the shortest space of time. Sometimes the desire of fame domineered in my soul, and then I would devise projects how I would have myself spoken about and written about, in the face of the world. At last the sight of a charming woman going about, arm in arm, with a gentleman, would excite in my breast a wish to be in the same predicament, and I would think of love and marriage. My passions shifted about with the impressions which I received, without leaving any traces of those which they succeeded in my heart. I endeavoured to convince myself that I was in love; to think that I ought to be in love; that it was impossible for me not to be in love. Groonya was beautiful and wise, or at least engaging for me in her conversation, which displayed a considerable acquaintance with French romances. She loved me, and, in my imagination, I added to her real good qualities all possible perfections, and formed in my mind a *beau idéal* which I was pleased to call Groonya. Constraining myself to think of love, I continually mused upon Groonya, and, on all occasions, sought food for my passion. If, in the course of my walks, I heard a peasant, on horseback or in a cart, singing the song, "Otchee, moye otchee, vwee yasneya otchee!" ("Eyes, my eyes, ye bright eyes,") I immediately recalled to my memory the deep azure eyes of my Groonya. If I heard any body saying of a woman; "Ah, what a dear creature!" I would say to myself; "But my Groonya is much dearer!" If it was said of any

one that he was fortunate in his wife, I would think : "and I shall be much more fortunate with my dear Groonya." In a word, Groonya was continually in my heart and soul, and I endeavoured to make her equally so in my eyes and mouth : for this purpose, if I was not able to be at her house, I would go to Vorovaateen's, to whom I could speak boldly of my love.

But, in their fifteenth year, city-bred girls are no longer children : Groonya loved me more in her heart than in her imagination. She taxed her ingenuity in applying to me the names of the heroes and expressions of tenderness, which made a conspicuous figure in romances. Her heart was fully occupied with me. She would spend the night without sleeping and in tears, if she did not see me for a whole day. When I could not be with her, I was obliged, at least, to pass the window, and make the usual signal with my hand, that I was satisfied with her, and had received her letter. When we were alone, our greatest pleasure consisted in looking one another in the face, squeezing one another's hands, and repeating a thousand times previously repeated expressions of endearment, which appeared novelties to us, or at least to her. Groonya loved to stroke my chubby, rosy cheeks, with her hand, while I played with her soft arms. It is to be understood, as a matter of course, that I bound myself a thousand times to marry no one but her ; while she took the same obligation on her part towards me. But *when* and *how*, we did not take into consideration. It appeared to us to be a very common

affair, to marry, and live like singing birds. I impatiently waited for permission to give up my visits to the boarding-school, and get rid of the name of school-boy: accordingly I resolved to petition my aunt to that effect.

One day after dinner, when my aunt appeared more cheerful than usual, I proceeded to fulfil my intention. "My dear aunt," said I; "it is of no use to continue paying for me at the boarding-school. I have at my finger-ends every thing which is taught there, and am only losing my time to no purpose, hearing over and over again what I knew long ago. I speak French like a native, understand German very tolerably, dance with ease, and of history, geography and other sciences I know as much as my masters: besides, by your kindness, I have become a tolerable musician. What more do I want? I am neither able nor willing to become a teacher, and for a man of the world I am already too learned. You know a great many people of rank and consequence: call them all over in your mind, and tell me which of them knows more than I do? Would it not be better for me to employ myself at home, in the improvement of my mind by reading, and at the same time seek my fortune in the service or in any way agreeable to you? Consider of it, aunt; and I beg you will not listen to that bear, Grabeelen, who only counsels you to send me to the boarding-school, in order to get rid of my presence." I noticed that my aunt's face grew red at these last words. "Do as you like, Vanushka," said she: "I do not wish you to be under constraint. I myself

see that you are wiser than all my acquaintance." "Therefore to-morrow is to be the last day that I shall go to the boarding-school." "The last day," repeated my aunt; "only you need not mention it to Grabeelen. You can keep to your own apartment when he is with me, or go out." "Excellent!" With grateful feelings I embraced my aunt, and, the same day, gave notice to M. Lebrilliant that I was not to continue any longer at his boarding-school. As he had a half-year's advance for my board, and we did not ask the money back, he was quite satisfied, and gave me such a splendid certificate on a large sheet of parchment, that, if credit were to be given to the half of what was written on it, I might be reckoned on a par with the seven sages of Greece. My aunt and I sincerely believed every thing that was written in the certificate: she, because she loved me to distraction, and I, because I had not hitherto met with a man who merited my respect for his knowledge and abilities.

My readers probably have already observed, that no mention has hitherto been made of any one employed in giving me lessons in religion, morality, or the improvement of the heart. To account for this, they must recollect, that I was at first in the very lowest rank of society, from whence I was raised, all at once, to a level with the children of people of rank and wealth. In the first-mentioned condition, the improvement of man's moral nature is never thought of, people being content with having their servants taught the mechanical use of their corporal functions, as dogs

are taught to carry a burden; in the other condition alluded to, they are entirely taken up with making a boy a man, exactly similar to those who by birth or riches have a right to live in what is called the great world. But, as in the higher circles neither religion nor philosophy is ever talked of, as no attention is paid either to learned people, or the sciences or moral conduct; the French language, dancing, and a knowledge of the practices of high life, are all that constitute the standard of excellence. For this alone money is paid to the French teachers, and they do no more than what is required of them. I must candidly confess that M. Lebrilliant was not in the least to blame during the time that I spent in his boarding-school, for not giving me the smallest idea of the duties of a man and a citizen; for nobody asked him to do it, and it is not the business of a well-bred person to incur himself with attending to what nobody asks him. To fulfil one's duty conscientiously, is a practice confined to the middle classes, who in the great world are called *la mauvaise compagnie* ! *

I had scarcely enjoyed a month of liberty, when grief broke in upon my sweet inactivity. One evening when Mrs. Shtoseen was playing at cards, and I, as usual, sought an opportunity of speaking with Groonya alone, a maid-servant whispered in my ear to go straight into the young lady's bed-room. I found Groonya in tears. She told me that her mother was going with her to Orenburg, in order to succeed to

* *La mauvaise compagnie* answering to this description is very rare in Russia.

some property left by a cousin-german of her husband. This respectable cousin was at first Secretary for the salt-department,* and after that superintendant of the market for bartering with the Kirgheez-Tartars. He passed for a very poor man all his life, and had received, on several occasions, pecuniary assistance from government, on account of his insufficient income ; but after his death, when his property was sealed up,† bank-receipts and bills were found for more than half a million of roubles. In his life-time he never heard of or from any of his relations, and indeed Mr. Shtoseen on several occasions kept out of his way, when he wanted assistance : but no sooner was there any scent of this inheritance, than up started some dozens of relations, who, in honour of the memory of the deceased, went to law with one another. The departure of Mrs. Shtoseen was fixed to take place within a week, and her return at an indefinite time. After weeping together, we renewed our bonds of eternal love and fidelity, and agreed to write one another every post, till I should find an opportunity for setting off to Orenburg. I made that promise to Groonya without thinking how I should perform it. Next day, I related every thing to my friend Vorovaateen, who immediately promised to assist me throughout, and even to take me to Orenburg, where, according to

* There are salt-works belonging to the Russian government not far from Orenburg.

† On the death of any person, the police come and seal up whatever moveable property he leaves, and these seals are not taken off till it is ascertained who is the legal heir.

his advice, it behoved me to follow up my addresses to Groonya, to marry her, and in quality of heir to the rich Kirgheezian superintendant, to sue for my share in a court of law, if Mrs. Shtoseen would not give up the inheritance by fair means ; Groonya, according to law, being nearest of kin to her father.

In the mean time, Grabeelen learned somehow that I had left the boarding-school ; and, as he had formerly driven me out of the house to school, so he now fell to work to drive me into the service. I resolved to convert his dislike for me to my own use.

It would be in vain to describe the tears, sighs, sobbings, and faintings, at parting with Groonya. These are disagreeable affairs known to every body. She had scarcely set off for Orenburg, when I began to look out for means to hasten after her. Vorovaateen condoled with me amidst my grief, and resolved immediately to conduct me to my beloved, and even advised me to set off without my aunt's permission. But I would not agree to that, and in a month after Groonya's departure, I succeeded in getting my aunt's permission by the following contrivance.

"Aunt!" said I to her, "I have been promised a good situation in the Mint at Moscow : but, as some experience is necessary in the first place, to qualify me for it, one of my acquaintances, who serves in the mining department, wishes to take me with him to Orenburg. He will not be there for more than four months, for the revision of business, and I will be with him in the capacity of letter-writer. On my return to Moscow, I shall have a fair claim for a si-

tuation in the public service, and my protector vouches for my immediate reception into the service, upon his representation, and as a reward for my previous labours. Give me your consent, aunt ! Is it not better that I should be obliged to myself and my own labour for my fortune, than to your friends, who, I suspect, do not love me over much ? You know that, without an officer's rank, I cannot appear in good company." It was long before my aunt would consent to part with me ; but when I told Mr. Grabeelen this story, which was invented by Vorovaateen, he obliged my aunt to let me go. One of Vorovaateen's friends undertook to play the part of the officer of the Mining-department at my aunt's house, and gave her the fullest assurance that he would take me under his special protection, promising at the same time all possible advantages in the service. My aunt equipped me for the road, and filled my pocket-book pretty handsomely. Even Grabeelen made me a present of fifty silver roubles. The good old gentleman, prince Tchvanoff, who had never broken off from his old practice of visiting my aunt daily, also gave me money, and a letter of recommendation to the Governor. After bidding adieu to my aunt, I seated myself in the carriage with Vorovaateen's friend, and he himself waited us beyond the barrier. I was just like a man in a fever, from the ebullition of opposite feelings—love to my aunt, commiseration and grief that I was leaving her, on the one hand ; and on the other, the joyful hope of meeting again with Groonya, of marrying her, and the delightful idea of acquiring wealth and envy.

The scattering of the attention by the variety of objects on the road, quieted my spirits a little, but involuntarily I always thought more of my aunt than of Groonya.

CHAPTER XI.

I get better acquainted with Vorovaateen's character—Conversation overheard—Presentiments—A provincial dealer in justice.

"How much money have you?" said Vorovaateen to me at the first stage. "A hundred and fifty silver roubles." "A goodly capital," answered Vorovaateen. "There are few at your time of life that have so much money in their hands: you are richer than I, Vanya. Justice requires that you should pay the half of the travelling expences." "I never intended otherwise," replied I, "and resolved to settle with you on our arrival at the place." "It is all the same," said Vorovaateen; "but, as you are not yet accustomed to handle money, give it to my care." "I think it lies quite safe in my own portmanteau." "It will be better in my trunk which has a lock to it," returned Vorovaateen. "Just as you please," said I, and immediately gave him the money, retaining only a few silver roubles for my own petty expences. For some stages, Vorovaateen was in a silent and thoughtful mood, and at last he renewed the conversation in a very grave and cold tone of voice. "Is it possible that your aunt should never have said anything to you about your father?" asked Vorovaateen, darting at me a penetrating look. "Nothing but what I told you." "It is strange, very strange," retorted

Vorovaateen. "I do not see the smallest strangeness," said I. "If there had been any thing particularly curious in my late father's life, my aunt would certainly have told me of it. But, perhaps, you know something?" added I, looking again at Vorovaateen: "you will oblige me greatly, if you can tell me any thing on that head." "How should I know?" answered Vorovaateen dryly. "If it gives you so little concern, why that scepticism?" "You do not know yet all the turnings and windings of the female character," said Vorovaateen. "When you suffer for your inexperience, your faith in their good qualities will not be so strong." "I have not the smallest cause for not putting confidence in my aunt, who loves me as if I were her own son, has done every thing in her power for me, and is ready to sacrifice every thing on my account." "That is the very thing," replied Vorovaateen, "which makes it difficult to believe that your aunt, who loves you so well, never said any thing to you about your father's condition, about your future hopes and so forth." "Although you have given me many lectures in praise of insincerity, I have not yet learned implicitly to follow your instructions," said I with some chagrin. "I repeat what I have already said, that with regard to my father's condition and origin, my aunt told me every thing which she deemed necessary; his adventures, I suppose, were not interesting, as she said nothing about them. For the rest, on my return to Moscow, I shall question her more particularly upon that head, which, till this moment, I conceived to be of little importance." "It is too

late now," said Vorovaateen, with a constrained smile. "Why should it be too late," asked I. Vorovaateen all at once got into a strange fit of laughing, and said, "We shall see by and by!" He turned the attention to other subjects, and endeavoured to amuse me; but grief had got possession of my heart, and I remained sad and silent. From thenceforth my confidence in Vorovaateen ceased, and I began to dread his ill-offices with Groonya, and to fear that he might make her acquainted with my previous condition. However, he began to caress me in his former manner, and to puff me up with hopes on the score of marriage and fortune.

We stopped to pass the night in the post-house of a small town. Towards evening there arrived in a post-cart, a middle-aged man who also stopped there for the night. I observed from the window, that Vorovaateen accosted the new comer in a familiar tone, but he, on his part, behaved towards Vorovaateen with a distant respect, and did not put on his cap till he told him to be covered. They stepped aside to the gable of the house, against a wall where there was no window, and entered into conversation together; but, as the wind happened to blow from that side, by stepping into the innermost room,* I overheard part of their discourse. "You have been in too great a hurry, Paphnooteetch," said Vorovaateen; "you should have waited till I had lived some time in the place, and thought upon the means. You know we cannot tie a stone about his neck, and throw him into the water without

* The rooms in Russian houses open into one another.

more ado." "It is not my business to contrive how to get him off your hands," replied the new-comer, "but the countess gave me no rest, and obliged me to go whether I would or not. It is said that the Count is on his return to Moscow." * * * * On this, the wind blew open the gate, and from the creaking and rapping, I did not hear the end of the sentence.— "Am I to blame that the Countess does not wish to have him dispatched? Whenever conscience interferes in a business." * * * * A carter who was in the court-yard, bawled out loudly to his comrade, and again I did not hear the end of Vorovaateen's speech. After that, the stranger said, "I was ordered to remain with you till the end of the business, to assist you throughout, and after it is finished, to return to the Countess, to her country seat near Moscow, at * * * * At these words, Vorovaateen and the stranger went out at the gate, and I remained at the window in a state of stupefaction and uneasiness on account of what I had heard. There could be no doubt but that Vorovaateen was brewing some mischief, and I, knowing the looseness of his principles, was convinced, that neither the fear of God nor the voice of conscience would keep him from the commission of crime. But who could that unfortunate victim be, for whose destruction this plot was contrived? Who could that Countess be, who impatiently waited for the news of her fellow-creature's misfortune? Who, that Count? Who, the new-comer? That dreadful secret, boding destruction to some one, made me shudder. I felt that it would be to no purpose to in-

quire of Vorovaateen, and to tell him that I had overheard part of his discourse with the unknown stranger. Besides, I dreaded, lest by discovering his intentions, I might draw down upon myself his anger and even vengeance ; so I resolved to be silent, to have all my eyes about me, and, if it should be possible, to prevent the execution of this wicked project. Tormented with these thoughts, I paced up and down the room, agitated with violent emotions. My heart beat strongly, my head felt heavy, my mouth was dry. I went into the postmaster's sitting room, in order to get a draught of water, and by chance saw the unknown stranger's *podoroajney*. From it I learned, that Vorovaateen's confederate was a *meshtchaneen** of Kolomna, called Prokhor Nojoff, and that he was travelling from Moscow to Orenburg.

To divert my attention, I went to take a walk through the town. But in our country-towns there are few attractions for a traveller. All that I saw from one end of the town to the other, as I walked along the streets, was—ragged boys, hungry dogs, horned cattle and fowls, cheek by jowl, grubbing amongst the dirt in the middle of the street ; old women with their arms akimbo standing at the gates of log-houses talking with their neighbours, or scolding one another ; grown-up men standing in crowds before the cabarets where the old men were seated ; and youths pacing to and fro before windows, from which now and then some sweet little female visages would peep

* The lowest class of freemen, for which there is no corresponding term in English ; the French *bourgeois* is nearest to it.

out. In some places the mourners' songs were heard; and to complete the picture, in two places, peaceable citizens were pulling each other by the hair in a circle of good neighbours and friends, while some respected fathers of families, inebriated with the gifts of the hyperborean Bacchus, joined arm in arm with some dozens of boys, and were singing a dancing song. It was the evening of a holiday.

The town was nothing but a large square space of ground surrounded with a broken railing; three-fourths of the enclosed ground were occupied as pasture.—A broad street, or properly speaking, the post-road, went through the middle of this enclosure. On both sides of this road, across the gutters, were built small wooden houses and huts. On the right and left were some lanes with huts half sunk in the ground, and large empty spaces of land inclosed with broken rails and palings. In the centre of the town was a square, in which was erected a brick church and a half-ruined structure of the same materials, which had at one time been destined for the government buildings. On paper this town occupied a great deal of space, and all the streets marked out in nature by the digging away of earth and the remains of gutters, formed a beautiful perspective on the plan. It was only a pity that heaps of dung and rubbish of all sorts, thrown together confusedly, occupied the place of the greater part of the houses so finely planned by the government architects. My readers,* in fine, have seen many such towns;

* *i. e.* Russian readers.

but as their names exist on maps and plans, kept in the public archives, and as the places for the construction of the houses are marked out, and even the ornaments contrived, it would appear that the half of the business was already done. For the rest, no one is to blame : man proposes and God disposes ! So it is as impossible to make a town populous without local advantages, as it is to fix the course of exchange.

On returning to the post-house, I found Vorovaateen in a very merry mood. He was waiting me to supper, and, in the meantime, while he treated the post-master with spirits, was asking him questions concerning the ways of living of all the neighbouring gentry, concerning the provincial magistrates, and all the news of the district. This was a practice of Vorovaateen's at every stage ; and by comparing the information of the post-masters with the evidence of the postillions and the keepers of the cabarets and baiting-houses on the road, he made his own deductions, and noted them down in his memorandum-book. When I one day inquired of him the reason for this curiosity, Vorovaateen coolly replied—"How can we know before hand, with whom we may have to do in the course of our life ? But when one knows many people's habits of thinking and acting, occasions may happen when this knowledge may be of service. I regard men as apothecaries' drugs, the peculiarities of which must be known in order to make use of them. In human intercourse as well as in the economy of inanimate nature nothing falls to the ground, if a wise man knows how to employ men's tempers and passions. The common

articles of diet in the hands of a skilful man may serve for the cure of diseases, and the greatest rogue or fool may also be sometimes of service to a wise man in his affairs." Vorovaateen, on telling me this, ended with his usual smile, adding—"Write down that psychological lesson in your calendar, Vanya. It is one of the principal rules of my philosophical school." Before this, I would have taken it up as a jest, but after the conversation which I had overheard, Vorovaateen's avowals made a disagreeable impression upon me; now that I knew they might have some fatal object in view.

There are people who think that it is possible to drown grief in liquor. I never experienced that, in the course of my life. For the first time, I attempted to eat and drink against my will, but the wine went down like gall, and the meat seemed to be tasteless, and heavy as a stone. The penetrating Vorovaateen perceived that I had lost my spirits, but did not guess the cause. "You appear to be angry with me, Vejeeghen?" said he. I held my peace. "It is not surely my questions about your father which have produced such an effect upon you?" added he. "Your questions were nothing, but your distrust of my word was very unpleasant to me," answered I. "Forgive me then, my dear fellow!" exclaimed Vorovaateen, embracing me, "believe me that my object was merely love to you. I heard a report in Moscow, as if your father had left some property behind him, and as if your aunt had appropriated it to herself, and God knows what else; and I merely wished to find out whether you knew any thing of it." "In such a case, why did not you

communicate your doubts to me directly, in place of beating about the bush? After revolving the matter well in my mind, I am sensible myself that there has been much which I cannot comprehend during my short existence. Can there be any thing stranger, for instance, than for the son of a gentleman to be thrown away, like a kitten, at the mercy of fate, on Gologordoffsky's property, and that no one should have sought after him, or troubled themselves about him, till the accidental meeting with his aunt? But how that could be done to deprive me of my inheritance, I cannot believe, after receiving so many proofs of affection from my aunt. She is ready to give up not only all that she possesses, but even her life for me, and if her advantage consisted in my not knowing my relations, she would never have owned me." "You argue like a book," returned Vorovaateen; "but I have experienced so much in my life-time, that I am accustomed to believe nothing but what is bad." "I pity you," said I, "and pray to God, that an epoch of such bitter experience may be far from me." "You must agree however," added Vorovaateen, "that it is very astonishing, I may rather say incomprehensible, that your aunt should recognize you in the shop, without having seen you since your infancy!" "I do not dispute but that may appear to you astonishing, merely because I never explained to you all the circumstances of the case. My aunt has two very striking likenesses of my father; one of them painted in his childhood, when he was about the same time of life as I was when she met me in the shop; the other in the twenty-fifth

year of his age, when he was married to my deceased mother. I have seen these portraits, and declare that it would not be easy to find in the whole world so striking a resemblance as there is between me and my father; while here even two drops of water are not alike. My aunt says, that, besides this, my voice, my gait, my smile and all my movements, become from day to day more like my father's, and that whoever has seen my father once in his life, either in his youth or on the picture, at the first glance will see that I am his son. And so you see that it was quite natural for my aunt, who keeps the two miniatures always in her toilette, and looks at them every day, to be struck at first sight with my resemblance to my father, and knowing the mark which was upon me, to be convinced that I was exactly her nephew. My own carelessness and indifference is more to be wondered at, that it never should come into my head to question my aunt about my parents." Vorovaateen heard me attentively, looked me full in the face, and became absorbed in thought. At last he rose from the table and said—"We have spoken enough about that: you have sufficiently explained it. It is now time to go to sleep."

It was long before I could shut my eyes. For the first time I began to repent that I had deceived my aunt, that I had thoughtlessly taken it into my head to fall in love with Groonya, that I had set off for a distant place in quest of love-adventures, and had connected myself with an unprincipled man. Reason may be compared to the sun, and passion to a conflagration.

gration. A man who should be in a house surrounded with flames and filled with smoke, does not see the sun. But when the fire abates, then is the re-appearance of the luminary of day hailed as the harbinger of safety and consolation. Reason spoke out within me, and I felt that the steps which I had taken would bring me into some unpleasant dilemma, particularly in Vorovaateen's company. I then resolved to embrace the first opportunity of returning to Moscow, to enter into the service, to be more cautious in the choice of my acquaintances, never more to fall in love, and decidedly to disengage myself from Vorovaateen. It is thus that in adversity we form wise projects which are forgotten as soon as the calamity or danger is passed.

I am not superstitious, but some prejudices, if they deserve that name, have taken strong root within me, and neither age nor experience, nor reason, can loosen them. The chief of them are, a belief in presentiments and in physiognomy. This day was the first in my life, in which I began to give credit to these presentiments as they are called. I shall here describe how I always felt when any misfortune threatened me. My heart beat more strongly than usual, and ached as if there was a wound in it: the circulation of my blood was interrupted, and, on reaching the heart, occasioned an unpleasant feeling. All the miseries which I had seen and experienced in my life recurred to my imagination, and were grouped together in a dismal picture of the future. In that picture I always drew myself in the most unfortunate point of view. My sleep was restless, and disturbed with the most

frightful dreams. Bodily weakness attended this prostration of spirits, and every time that I was looked in the face or asked any question, some suspicion was excited in my mind : every noise or loud bawling, every appearance of any stranger who was unexpected, conjured up a crowd of fears within me. People who were nearest to my heart in love and friendship, whom I had never doubted, became then intolerable to me. On the occurrence of every paroxysm, I expected the stroke of fate like a doomed malefactor, and I confess, it rarely happened that after such a condition of mind, I did not fall into some misfortune, or at least meet with something disagreeable. With regard to physiognomy, I took my first lesson in Vorovaateen's features, which from that day I began to study with the greatest attention, to weigh all his words and actions, and observe the corresponding changes in his countenance. From that time forward, I could never refrain from judging people from the impression excited in my mind at the first interview. I afterwards read the compositions of Lavater and Delaporta on physiognomy, but always maintain my own system, and form my judgment not from the lines of the countenance, but, so to say, from the play of the physiognomy and the *accueil* of the individual. If a man looks at me through his eye-lashes, or does not look me fair in the face when he speaks ; if he minces his words through his teeth, and studiously composes his speech during the conversation ; if he discourses with me in questions, always asking my opinion, implicitly agrees with me, or only contradicts me in order to

draw out a fuller explanation from me ; I declare, I would not trust such a man. An artificial smile and a constrained laugh serve me for evidences of insincerity. Grimaces made involuntarily with the mouth, a continual moving of the lips, and biting them, are with me bad omens. An unequal gait in which a certain sort of foxish turns are visible, a wrenching of the whole body upon one centre, or crouching similar to that of a cat before a mouse, and a stretching of the head forward like a serpent preparing to throw itself upon its prey, are in my eyes infallible marks of a bad man. A loud manifestation of joy, and greeting of every acquaintance on meeting, appear to me very suspicious. I shall conclude my short digression, by declaring that I was sometimes under a mistake in my presentiments, but never made any in physiognomy. There are many of my physiognomical observations which I do not describe now : my readers may see them afterwards in the portraits of many of the persons whom I met with in the course of my life. With regard to presentiments, I ought to mention that they always occurred with me after some transgression or rash action, when I might expect deserved or undeserved enmity on the part of my enemies. It was not a cause but a consequence ; not a forwarning genius like that of Socrates, but a foretelling one like that of Brutus. In short, whoever has to do with human selfishness and passions, must very frequently expect calamities, although he has done nothing bad, even though on the contrary, he may have merited praise and reward. This is the way of

the world: he who does no mischief himself, must have his trials, and must suffer from the wickedness of others. What constitutes the difference between a good and a bad man in this case, is, that a good man amidst the greatest misfortunes, finds consolation in his own conscience, and in the opinions of honest people, while a bad man has neither haven nor hope in that world where the strong cannot oppress the weak.— But to return to the thread of my story.

Not knowing how to disguise my feelings, I could not look cheerful, but in order to avert all suspicion, I told Vorovaateen that I was unwell. I do not know whether he believed me, but he redoubled his caresses and attention, and behaved towards me with all the tenderness of a father, which in some measure reconciled me to him. To give me time to recruit my health, he stopped for some days in a small *district-town* which lay in a beautiful situation on the banks of the Volga. Vorovaateen had here an old friend who held the office of Sheriff,* (capitan-eespravneek,) to whom he opened his mind freely. In their company I heard things of which I had no idea before. As they, at that time, made a strong im-

* The office of Capitan Eespravneek, chief district or county-magistrate, corresponds more with that of a Scotch Sheriff than of an English one. The office of sheriff in England comprehends both that of Sheriff and convener of the county in Scotland, which are also distinct offices in Russia. The convener of the county goes under the name of *Dvoraynsky Predvodetl* in Russian. Both offices are elective and triennial, the landholders have the appointment, but the crown-advocate must sanction the election before it is final.

pression upon me, I shall communicate some of the particulars to my readers.

Sava Saveetch was reckoned one of the cleverest Sheriffs in the whole province. He was of a full figure, and, from having served some time in the police-dragoons, still retained his military attitudes and manner, kept himself always as straight as a rush, and in turning, made a rapid *face-about* with his whole body. Years and the fumes of his potations had weakened the roots of his hair, so that he had lost it almost entirely, except some tufts on his whiskers and chin. His long nose and the extremities of his meagre face were covered with livid carbuncles: from under his bushy, hoary eyebrows, glared a pair of small, grey, cattish eyes. He always went about in his official uniform-surtout, and wore in his waist a cossack *porte-épée*. He never put on his sword but when he went upon any official business; his usual weapon was a cossack whip with a leaden bullet plaited into the end of it. His head was generally covered with a stiff-crowned leathern cap which added to his military appearance. His voice was like the growling of a bear. His writing-department was managed by an old clerk who spent three fourths of his time with his leg tethered to a writing-table.* In addition to this, by Sava Saveetch's orders, his boots were taken off, to prevent him from decamping to the cabaret. But the supple clerk found the road to the

* In Russia, desks are seldom used in public offices; in their place they have long tables generally covered with red cloth.

bottle without rising from his chair. Some of his cronies among the understrappers would fetch him *vodky* in apothecaries' phials, several doses of which he would dispatch every hour, from the time that Sava Saveetch had, in quest of his bottles and cans, ransacked the stove, chimney, and even behind the casks and tubs. On holidays only he had liberty to get drunk, and then he was usually brought home at night, as stiff as a stock, laid in the lock-up room, and water poured upon him. In his journeys through the district, Phomeetch (this was his name) had also full permission to drink a settling bowlful, but only after he had finished his business; for after his drinking bouts, his hand shook so as to render him unfit for work. Sava Saveetch called Phomeetch a golden man, and his inclination to drunkenness he attributed to his uncommon talents, which, in the opinion of old-fashioned people, cannot flourish unless they are moistened with spiritual dew. According to this maxim, Sava Saveetch was himself a genius: however to give him his due, Sava Saveetch was thoroughly versed in business, particularly in conducting examinations,* following up proofs, and general investigations; only he did not know how to put his thoughts on paper so easily as he could pour ardent spirits down his throat; could not pick out for himself in both capitals such a pair of spectacles as would enable him to read hasty-written papers even by syllables, the same as if they

* The sort of questioning, here alluded to, is used in a fuller sense than the English word expresses, corresponding more with a synonymous term in Latin.

were printed, and owing to his multiplicity of business, did not recollect the dates of the Ukazes.* In this Phomeetch was his mentor. The inhabitants of the district, as a tribute of justice to Sava Saveetch, called him the *grey wolf*, and his faithful coadjutor Phomeetch was called the *trap*. The sheriff came to spend the evening with us, and when the tea-urn was brought in, he wetted his throat with punch made with Kizlarsky brandy,† and shewed a disposition to open his mind to us. He began in his usual way with his favourite exclamation: “Bad times! Bad times! Education—legislation! *but no MONEY!* *There’s the rub!*”‡ “Have done with your complaints upon the times, Sava Saveetch:” returned Vorovaateen. “Do you think I don’t know that the government-berths pay well: the devil himself could not keep you sitting here, if you did not make a livelihood of it.” “All very fine, but what would you have me to do with myself?” said the sheriff with an air of chagrin. “We have nothing to live upon but our former savings;|| for all the jobs which we have now-a-days will not keep us in pocket-money. Consider that we have to

* The ukazes are the same to Russia as acts of Parliament are to England, and are the only written laws.

† Brandy made at Kizlar, a town on the Terek which runs into the Caspian sea.

‡ It is difficult to translate this passage into English with the same point as it has in the original. The word *legislation* is here inserted for *institia* which, in Russian, does not mean literally *justice*, but the juridical department of the state.

|| The salary attached to offices such as these is a mere trifle, unless the landholders subscribe among themselves to augment it; a thing which rarely happens.

feed the good folks in the government-town as children have to feed their old daddy. What signifies my having nine thousand two hundred and eighteen souls, if these souls are in an empty body !” “How !” exclaimed I : “you have nine thousand two hundred and eighteen souls, and you complain of your poverty !” The sheriff smiled and replied : “These souls, brother, please to observe, are not mine but the emperor’s, lying under my management ; but he who milks the cow has a right to drink milk, and it cannot be otherwise, but when the emperor has his fill, there must be some scrapings left by *accidences*,* as it is called : but now, bad times ! bad times ! education—legislation ! *but no MONEY ! there’s* the rub ! Something, it is true, is to be made if there should be a hue and cry after deserters and vagabonds in our district, but unfortunately that is a rare occurrence ; and it is difficult to trace them on any person’s property. It is easy to see that the day of judgment is nigh at hand ! for theft is become rare, and murders are scarcely heard of. It is changed times for our brethren the lawyers, whose purses now are in a galloping consumption ! No business, no livelihood. In the meantime they write us from the higher courts ; aye, they writes us, that prisons were not made for nightingales ; that coats cannot be stitched with compliments, and the like. Misery, nothing but misery ! On all sides we are invaded by what is called the march of intellect : they have got a substitute for law-

* Extra-dues, extra-fees, and some sorts of fines go under the name of *accidentia* or *accidence*, in the government offices.

yers in the shape of books which they can carry in their pockets : decent people like us are now a standing jest and laughing-stock in the two capitals, and that not only on the stage, but in the newspapers ; and for what ? Why, because forsooth, we, poor devils, want to eat dry bread for our labour. Even our country gentry are grown wise now-a-days. They are not content with the theory, but they must try their hands at the practice of law, and hardly any mischief happens, but off they post direct to the higher provincial courts, and even to head-quarters. It is better, say they, to feed the wolf than the wolf's whelps. It is true I tease them properly, and handle them with iron gloves. If I find but one deserter in the district, I make him confess that he has been harboured by all the rich proprietors and even peasants, (their masters being answerable,) and immediately I turn the whole district upside down. If a dead body should chance to be found, I toss it about to thirty different places, in order to implicate every body. A stolen horse I trace on paper, in one night, to twenty different stables. But all that is sad fagging, a hard-earned kopeek ! drive about, run about, here and there, write, examine, cross-examine, and knock about like a fish among the ice, a hundred times in one place, fifty times in another, and ten times in a third ! Bad times, brother ! Education—legislation !” Sava Saveetch here washed down his grief, and knocking his glass upon the table, ceased to give utterance to his thoughts. Vorovaateen was pleased with his friend's openness, and endeavoured to renew the conversation. “ But the fairs, Sava

Saveetch, and passports, and prosecutions for government-debts, and private debts, the registering of property, rich guardianships, and besides that, the repairing of the roads, conveying of government-stores, &c. &c.?" "The devil has skimmed off the cream of all this," angrily replied Sava Saveetch. "Few gamesters come to the fairs, and they who do come are as poor as church-mice, and have not the wherewithal to pay the usual fees for permission to fleece the country-gentry, with whom it is now the fashion to go to one of the two capitals to be ruined. There is little to be got from passports: little work in the capitals: trade goes on badly, and few peasants leave the district in quest of work, either for themselves or their horses. It is true that we are paid well for our trouble in prosecuting government-defaulters and private debtors; but the orders are very strict now, and the governors and procureurs bear hard on our fraternity if we lose sight of the government-interests. Of private business not a word. In my opinion, though debts were as common as dung, they would rather let them stand over, than put the business into our hands. It is an age since we have had a prosecution for debt, or any thing to register or copy: the provincial and district-courts correspond with one another in a friendly manner, and let the money-lender read, if he please, the regulations respecting prosecutions for debt, and amuse himself with the fair and legible hands of the clerks of the court. That is an object, thank God, which they leave as it is, without picking any holes. The roads, brother, and conveyance of stores are mere

trifles ! For it is only the post-roads which we repair, and them only when any important personage is about to travel that way : as for the other roads, though the devil himself break his neck, that is not our business ! The troops are now quartered on the frontiers, so that loads are scarce. With regard to guardianships, you are mistaken, my friend, in assigning us a revenue from that source. To be sure, every body may make something by the property of a ward, if he gets it into his hands ; but now the gentry keep these sweet morsels to themselves, and can manage the business in as masterly a style as any of us. If any person is placed under our inspection for bad management ; in a case like that, a rat might die of hunger on such an estate. No, brother, bad times, bad times ! Education—legislation ! *but no MONEY ! there's the rub !* “ No, Sava Saveetch !” said Vorovaateen : “ things are not changed so much as you would make us believe : the difference is only in this, that you must now do every thing under the rose : there was a time when you laid hold of your booty as an experienced marksman does the game which he has brought down ; but now—” “ But now,” said the sheriff, “ we must have all our eyes about us : honesty is the order of the day,” added he, and again repeated his favourite expression : “ Bad times, bad times ! Education—legislation ! *but no MONEY ! there's the rub !*” Vorovaateen went out of the room, and the sheriff addressed himself to me : “ You are, I understand, a relation of Mr. Vorovaateen ?” “ Yes, Sir.” “ You have not yet entered the service ?” “ No.”

"It is time, Sir; high time; especially if you think of entering the civil service. The grammar of the law, Sir, is an ocean! You will not drink it all, but you must do what you can at the water's edge. To speak the truth, the only people who understand the business are those who have begun at the lowest gradations. I advise you to lose no time." Meanwhile, Vorovaateen returned into the room, and the talkative sheriff, observing that his friend had put on a taciturn and serious air, began on his part to torment him with questions. I let them go on with their conversation about their common acquaintances without attending to the particulars, but a topic at length occurred which aroused me. "I say, friend: I believe you are in my debt," said the sheriff to Vorovaateen. "For what?" asked Vorovaateen. "How! You surely have not forgotten, that, in virtue of your letter, I allowed the *Meshtchaneen*, Nojoff, to escape from prison, who was accused of having run away from Siberia to which he had been banished? You sent only three hundred roubles, and promised me as much more: in the meantime Nojoff stalks about at liberty, and I have not so much as heard the clink of your money. Aha, brother! that is not acting like a man of honour." "My dear Sava Saveetch," said Vorovaateen, "is it for us to reckon up trifles like that? You did a good action. Nojoff was unjustly sentenced, and I, from mere humanity, sacrificed my own money for his deliverance. I thought that on his return to Moscow he would repay me, and give me still more for you; but he fell ill in the course of a month after, and died

from the effects of fear, a victim to human malice." "That is not exactly gospel," said the sheriff coolly. "Nojoff has, since that time, been long known to the police for various offences; he is still a public character, and I learned lately that some of our merchants had seen him in Moscow last winter. No, friend, that will not do: I must have the money. Perhaps you don't know that I had myself a narrow escape, owing to that damn'd affair: had to encounter two examinations, three reprimands, and, in addition to all the expences, had a fine to pay. And after all, I would not have got off as I did, if the Procureur's lady, thank God, had not taken a fancy to my new Moscow-made sledge." "Very well, very well; we shall make it up with you," said Vorovaateen: "but go to bed now, for my head aches." Sava Saveetch made a wry face, but, to console himself, emptied the bottle and went home. We immediately lay down;* but I could not sleep the whole night for thinking of Vorovaateen's connection with such an infamous villain as Nojoff. At break of day, when I fell asleep, a shocking dream represented to me Nojoff in the act of cutting off my head with an axe. I screamed out, leaped out of bed as if the dream was a reality, and awakened Vorovaateen. He was frightened, and concluded from my restless sleep, that I was in a fever. He

* There are no bed-rooms in the houses upon the road, but if the traveller should have a bed or pillow with him, he gets it spread out at night on the floor of the sitting-room; if he have no bed, he can generally find either a sofa or a piece of felt to stretch himself out upon for the night, at least in the post-houses.

undertook to cure me, and would force me to drink some sort of tincture : I refused to follow his prescription, and he desisted from taking any farther charge of my health.

After this, in order to escape from the importunities of his friend, the Sheriff, he resolved to leave the town immediately. On learning that Sava Saveetch had gone out some distance upon business, for a few hours, he sent for horses, and before mid-day, we posted for Orenburg.

CHAPTER XII.

The Freedman—Lunatic—Love's labour lost.

WE arrived at Orenburg at about ten o'clock in the morning, and put up in the suburbs, at the house of the *Meshtchaneen*, Ivan Karpoff, who kept a sort of *Postoyaalee dvor* * for acquaintances and people recommended to him. We were shewn into two clean rooms hung with coloured paper, while Vorovaateen's servant, a species of automaton, or machine for taking off boots and brushing clothes, was lodged opposite, in the landlord's apartments. Vorovaateen, after changing his clothes, immediately went into the city, saying that he would return late in the evening, and advised me to dine at home and rest after the journey. Being left alone, I called upon the landlord, in order to learn, in the course of conversation, something of Matrena Ivanovna Shtoseen, and her daughter my dear Groonya, on whose account the journey had been undertaken. Our landlord was a man about fifty years of age, good-looking, tall, broad-shouldered and ruddy-faced, who might have stood as a model for a Hercules. He was of a cheerful and talkative temperament, as full-blooded and lively people generally are. On my asking him the question whether he was a native of

* A place of 'entertainment for men and horses.'

the place or a settler, he related his history in a few words. "I was born, Sir, in the neighbourhood of Moscow, and was a serf of Generálsha* Volokeeten, a rich widow who possessed a great deal of landed property. They say that I was not ugly in my younger days ; this was the source of all my misfortunes, which, by the Lord's mercy, have had a happy termination. The Generálsha coming one summer to our village, saw me at work, and immediately took me into her household. I was then sixteen years of age and my mother's only son. My hair they cropped in the German fashion, dressed me in a laced coat, and put me under the tuition of an old footman and the housekeeper, to be initiated into the mysteries of the service. With tears I exchanged my sheep-skin coat for an embroidered livery. Household servants always appeared to me to be tied-up dogs, and I never envied their condition. In other respects, I lived very well in the manor-house. The lady used to caress me, pat my cheeks, and stroke my head, and even send me dainties from her table. The maid-servants looked kindly upon me, and even the house-steward behaved towards me as if I was a nobleman's son. I did not understand the meaning of all these marks of kindness and distinction, till the old housekeeper, under whose orders I was, gave me to understand that I would soon be called to fill an office not at all to my mind. This duty consisted in being always about the lady, and this appeared to me to be more terrible than the

* The title of a General's wife.

king of terrors. An icy chill ran through my veins at these tidings. A single look at the lady made me shudder from top to toe ! Figure to yourself a short, thick, fifty-year-old goody, with her face smeared all over with white and red paint, like a horse-carpet, with goats' eyes and red hair mixed with grey ; who, in place of teeth, clattered a parcel of loose yellow bones in her mouth. Her voice was like the creaking of an ungreased cart, and she was continually scolding or screaming at the servants, or caressing and calling to her lapdogs. Having heard the story of Baba (Goody) Eega,* it appeared to me that she could have been neither better nor worse than my Generalsha. The housekeeper let me know that the former valet Pheelka† would set off next day for Moscow, to live under a passport, and the same day I would step into his shoes. This Pheelka was a young man of two-and-twenty. He had held his situation for six years, (for the lady always chose for herself valets of that time of life), and though he had been a good-looking lad, his features were so altered, probably from grief and vexation, that he had all the appearance of a corpse. He was quite rejoiced at his deliverance, and waited with impatience for the day of his departure. But I anticipated him. As soon as it was dark, I

* Baba Eega is the heroine of a Russian nursery tale, in which her person is described by alliterations conveying not the most delicate ideas ; but the upshot of the story is that she eats her own god-child. The tale has some resemblance to the old English one of *'Little Red Riding-hood.'*

† Pheelka is a diminutive for Philip.

quietly took a horse out of the stable, leaped upon his back without a saddle, and rode to the high way at full gallop without knowing whither and wherefore.— Every time that my lady's charms recurred to my mind, I gave a kick extraordinary to the horse, as if she were behind me. Never man fled with such eagerness from bad treatment, as I from an opposite motive. At last, by day-break, I rode into the district-town to the *Eespravneek* whom I knew personally, as he frequently came to our village to collect money, I know not whether for himself or the government. I honestly told the *Eespravneek* what the housekeeper had said to me, and resolutely declared my intention to enlist as a soldier* rather than return to my mistress. The *Eespravneek* and his wife laughed till the tears came into their eyes, at my story, but to assist me was impossible, seeing that I made a mere verbal complaint without any proofs. My horse was put into the stable, and I myself into the lock-up room, and my mistress was informed of what had happened. I afterwards learned that the *Bespravneek* got a good round sum for quashing the information ; while I, for running away and stealing the horse, was whipped in the court and banished to an estate of my lady's in the government of Saratoff, where there was a vodka-distillery ; orders at the same time were given to treat me with the utmost rigour, and punish me as often as possible. Fortunately my lady did not know that the manager of the distillery who was also one of

* The next to the lowest point of human misery, according to the ideas of a Russian peasant, is to enter the army.

her serfs, was my second uncle. He pitied my unfortunate condition, ordered his clerk to teach me reading, writing, and arithmetic, and after that, employed * me to assist him in keeping the accounts. Nobody in the distillery except my uncle knew of my adventures, and as he kept the people under strict controul, I was looked up to, being his assistant. At the end of ten years, my lady went to the other world, and with her ended my misfortunes. She was succeeded by her son whom she would not suffer near her eyes in her lifetime, because on one occasion, when at home from the regiment on a furlough, he took it into his head to make love to one of her *elevées** or, properly speaking, maid-servants, that is to say, orphans of people not exactly in the lowest condition. My young master knew the reason of my banishment, and on his arrival at the distillery, called me to him, spoke to me in terms of kindness, and, at my uncle's recommendation, made me manager of the distillery, while he gave him the management of the whole estate and his freedom at the same time. As I knew the business and was guided by the fear of God, I gained my master's favour. At last, in the course of twelve years, our good master died childless, and in his will gave me my freedom, along with other old household servants. By economy and industry, joined to the generosity of my good master, I amassed a small capital, and resolved to

* Most people in good circumstances in Russia who have no legitimate or illegitimate offspring of their own, adopt and bring up children of others, and the law grants great facilities to the bequeathing of property in such cases.

settle in Orenburg, where, chancing to be on a former occasion, I had looked out a bride for myself. It is now fifteen years since I came here and married, built this small house, and have, under God's protection, carried on a little traffic with the Kirgheez Tartars. God has blessed me with good children ; my oldest daughter is already fourteen years of age ; my second, twelve, and my youngest child, my son, in his tenth year. This is the way, Sir, in which I chanced to come here ! No one can foresee what is to happen from his birth, and God alone knows where we may leave our bones. But do you please to eat any thing ? This is a holiday and we can give you a pie* made with buck-wheat and Ural fish." I did not wish to part from my worthy landlord, and asked permission to dine along with his family, which he readily granted, adding—" If you are not upon ceremony, just do as you please."

It is a happy thing that nature and fortune distribute their gifts without regard to birth or pretensions. How many rich people would think themselves fortunate, if, in place of their yellow-faced or pale-looking children, they had such a healthy, rosy-cheeked offspring as my landlord's ! His wife, a woman of five-and-thirty, fresh, active, and industrious, was

* Pies are a favourite dish of the lower sort of Russians who are in good circumstances, particularly on holidays. They are usually baked of second flour with butter and suet, or stuffed with buck-wheat grits along with turned milk and carrots ; during the fasts, the flour is baked with hemp-oil, and the buck-wheat usually mixed with mashed mushrooms.

of as cheerful a frame of mind as her husband. My good host and hostess took a liking for me when we first met, and behaved like old acquaintances, while their oldest daughter cast some stolen looks at me, blushed and held down her large black eyes whenever they encountered mine. This girl appeared to me to be much prettier than Groonya ; but, as I had come expressly on Groonya's account, I resolved at last to question my landlord about her mother :—" Mrs. Shtoseen lives in our city," replied my landlord, " and keeps a full house. She has a daughter young and giddy, who attracts the gentlemen of the army as honey allures flies. It is two months ago that a young officer who lived with me, wanted to marry her ; but, having lost his money at cards, he took a second thought, and guessed rightly that Mrs. Shtoseen's house is nothing but a trap where people are daily plundered, and that her daughter is nothing but a decoy for simpletons. This officer told me a great deal of the proceedings, both of mother and daughter, but I do not like to repeat what is bad, and it is better for you, Sir, not to know." Dinner was over, and I did not dare to ask the landlord any further particulars. With a heavy heart I went into my room and lay down in bed. It was long before I could get any sleep for thinking of my bitter lot and woeful disappointment in my first friendship and my first-love. I comforted myself however with the reflection, that perhaps the stories of the officer to my landlord might not be true, and might be the ravings of a man who had ruined himself by play.

I resolved accordingly to believe nothing till I should see it with my own eyes.

Vorovaateen returned earlier than I expected. He was grave and serious. After a light supper, he went to bed, saying that he was indisposed. From vexation I followed his example, though I felt no inclination to sleep. About midnight, when I began to slumber, a strange noise in the adjoining room alarmed me. I rose out of bed, took hold of the handles of the door, and opening one half, I saw Vorovaateen sitting at the window, with nothing on him but his shirt, and his breast bare. His face was overcast with a deadly paleness ; the red spots assumed a violet colour ; his eyes were open, and it seemed as if they sucked in with greediness the rays of the moon : his hair was clotted together and stood on end. His lips quivered as if he attempted to speak, — and on a sudden he began to beat his breast and tear his hair, gnashing with his teeth. I trembled for fear and durst not speak a single word, but could not leave the spot. Vorovaateen bawled out in a terrible, unearthly voice, and, on a sudden, began to speak loudly but very fast and unintelligibly. At last he grew calmer and spoke distinctly and comprehensibly :—“ What right have you to warn me, to threaten, to counsel ? You a priest — God be with you ! Counsel him who seeks your instructions. I had recourse to you in time of sickness, and you, from knowing some of the secrets of my soul, have presumed to hector me at first meeting : no, father Peter, no ; your preaching is all wast-

ed upon me. I am well, I am well, and may live twenty or thirty years yet." After a slight pause, Vorovaateen continued—"True : it is time to call that to my recollection. How many credulous youths have I been the means of ruining ! I, like a fallen angel, teach the thoughtless ungodliness, and am myself afraid to appear before a righteous God ! Is it possible that I, who have recruited the ranks of hell, should save myself from the same fate ? No. Think again. Ruining the inexperienced by false play, betraying them into the hands of sharpers, instilling into the minds of those whom I led astray, a hatred for all the moral and civil obligations of mankind, for lucre's sake, I have up to this hour never yet attained riches which have been the object of my pursuit for a whole age. I have hardly fifty thousand roubles* ready money. That is little, very little. Look ye, father Peter ! As soon as I have made up the sum of a hundred thousand, I give you my word that I will become an honest man, will settle in a distant country where I am not known, and will live quietly and will cheat or ruin no one. I will keep all the fasts, go to church and pray regularly, and at my death will leave my money to build a monastery. I have three affairs at present on hand ; once they are finished, there will be little wanting to make up the hundred thousand. If I could but get that d—d Vejeeghen off my hands. But that is not my business ; I wash my hands of it. Let Nojoff proceed as he thinks proper.

* Rather more than £2000 Sterling.

It is his affair. I have fulfilled my part of the commission, have led him on a wild-goose chase to the frontiers of the empire. Oh father Peter, why do you stare on me so horribly? Cease preaching upon hell and the last judgment and everlasting fire! It is frightful, very frightful! I teach others to disbelieve it, and cannot hear of it myself without trembling. Avaunt, begone, father Peter! Horrible! horrible! Here is fire, here is blood, blood!" At these words Vorovaateen trembled all over, and fell from the window on the floor: his breathing ceased, as if his soul had left its earthly tenement. On a sudden he screamed out and shut his eyes. I myself grew almost insensible, and shook like an aspen leaf. Not daring to disturb Vorovaateen, and fearing I might awaken him, I summoned all my strength, reached my bed, and threw myself on it with exhaustion, as if it were after an attack of the ague. I was now confirmed in my suspicions that some conspiracy was on foot against me, and that the conversation overheard between Nojoff and Vorovaateen related to me. But who was that Nojoff? What had I done to him? What had I done to Vorovaateen? What countess wants my destruction? I never offended any woman in my life time. It must be some scheme of Grabeelen's. Of all the visitors at my aunt's house, Grabeelen was the only one who did not like me. But a Countess! ——— Incomprehensible! With such and similar reflections I fell asleep at day-break from mere exhaustion. Thinking that Vorovaateen was in a fever, I resolved to employ the time of his illness for my

own deliverance, and to conceal myself from him and his friend Nojoff, who was also, no doubt, at this time in Orenburg.

To my astonishment, Vorovaateen next day arose from his bed in perfect health and spirits: I, on the contrary, felt a numbness through all my members, and found myself upon the whole quite out of order. At tea, Vorovaateen proposed to me to go a hunting next day, which I declined, fearing that he might on that occasion put his plot into execution. He told me that Mrs. Shtoseen was not in town, but would return in a few days, and advised me in the mean time to keep the house, adding, that he saw from my face that I was not well. I promised not to go out, but he had scarcely left the house when I dressed myself, and resolved to get authentic information about Mrs. Shtoseen, as I did not believe Vorovaateen. I wished at least to bid adieu to Groonya, and after that, to look out for ways and means to return to Moscow. I relied upon the assistance of my worthy landlord.

At ten o'clock in the morning, I was already in the neighbourhood of the house occupied by Mrs. Shtoseen, and learned from the neighbours that she had not left the town. There was a wicket from her garden to the street, and I entered that way in order to take breath and prepare myself for meeting with Groonya, against whom I had been so sadly prepossessed. Passing gently through a dark alley, I perceived a summer house at the end of it. Through the branches of trees and the trellis-work which com-

posed the walls of the summer house, I observed something white. Advancing on tiptoe nearer to the summer house, I overheard Groonya's voice conversing with a person of the other sex.

"I congratulate you, Groonya", said the gentleman, "on the arrival of an admirer from Moscow, and a successful admirer, Vorovaateen says: this youth, in reliance on your love and hand, has run away from his relations to see his sweetheart, a distance of some thousand versts. That is no joke, my dear Groonya: he certainly must have strong cause to expect a reciprocal affection on your part." Have done with your foolery, *mon cher Alexandre*, replied Groonya: "Vorovaateen intentionally stirs up your jealousy by silly stories. It is true that I knew this same Vejeeghen in Moscow, and perceiving his foolish passion for me, relieved myself from ennui at his expense. But do you seriously think, that such a little, unfledged scape-grace, who in the seventeenth year of his age, before he had finished his schooling, gave himself the airs of a gamester and a gallant; in a word, a hopeful disciple of that infamous rascal Vorovaateen; do you think that such a creature could engage my affections? My mother ordered me to pay him some little attention, because he always lost money at her card-table—and this is all our connexion. It grieves me that you should even in jest be jealous of such a school-boy." "But it is said," continued he, "that this Vejeeghen has very good features, is clever beyond his years, easy in his address, sings and plays on the piano and guitar excellently; in a word that he

is capable of turning the head"—"of some silly country fool," replied Groonya. "How could I think of preferring his wishy-washy, half-girlish face, to such a masculine countenance, such dear little whiskers, such martial eyes."—The gentleman did not allow Groonya to finish her sentence, and I heard the sounds of kissing.

Wounded self-love, anger and vexation, here got the better of me. I sprang like a madman out of the bushes, and appeared before the astonished lovers. Groonya sighed and covered her face with her hands. The officer of hussars leaped from his seat, knocked upon the ground with his sword, and exclaimed rudely; "Who are you, and how dare you come here without asking permission?" I did not answer a word to the officer, but, turning to Groonya, said; "You deceiver; you cheat! You call me a school-boy, a scape-grace: you say that you never loved me, and that you played upon my sincerity. But I have in my hands proofs, if not of your love, at least of your falsehood and coquetry. Here, do you see your hair, your letters in which you assured me of your eternal, your boundless attachment; and bound yourself to be mine for ever. I am now undeceived with regard to your worthless character, will exclaim against you every where, and read your letters to every body. Have you any curiosity Mr. Officer?" Groonya with eyes full of tears, throwing herself about the officer's neck, exclaimed, "Screen me from that blackguard, or I shall die of vexation! The impudent liar! If you love me, protect me!" It appeared that the officer

was not over much concerned for the delicacy of Groonya's feelings, and that in the enjoyment of the present, he did not trouble his head either about the past or the future. He threw himself on me like a madman, plucked out of my hands my letters and Groonya's hair, and, seizing me by the collar, he dragged me out of the summer house. Resistance on my part only drew down upon myself additional blows : the brawny officer tossed me out at the wicket, and giving me a kick, locked the door. I became insensible ; shame and confusion completely overpowered me. I ran home, wanted to shoot myself, to shoot the officer, and Groonya. A thousand shocking thoughts succeeded one another : but, on arriving at my lodgings, I felt a weakness creeping all over me. It appeared as if my skin was being seared with a red hot iron, and as if all my blood was blazing into flame. I soon lost my senses, and except a dreadful heat in my head, and thirst, I had no consciousness of being in the land of the living.

CHAPTER XIII.

A prisoner with the Kirgheez—Philosophic chieftain—I learn the art of horsemanship.

I do not recollect how long I continued insensible, but I came to myself in a dream. I dreamed that I fell into water, and lay in the bottom of a deep river. Cold made me awake. I opened my eyes and attempted to stir, but felt that I was wrapped up in something wet, and that I was bound. A sound like that which arises from playing the *goodka*,* fell upon my ears. With the greatest labour I turned my head from the wall to the light, and every thing which appeared before my eyes excited my amazement. I lay in a tent on a heap of felt, and saw I was wrapped up quite naked in a sheep-skin with the wool outwards. Beside my bed there sat a man in a striped *khalaat*, with a high, black, sheep-skin cap: he was playing on a *goodka* and singing with a plaintive voice, making a regular movement with his head and frightful grimaces. From this man's oblong eyes, dingy face, prominent cheek-bones and thin hair on the whiskers and beard, I recognised him as a Kirgheez. He was uncommonly glad when he perceived that I had opened my eyes, and exerting himself to relieve

* Russian guitar.

me from my captivity, leaped from his seat, turned about several times on his hands, and cried with all his strength, beating a drum which hung from his sash. At his cry several Kirgheez came in, and with them three women. One Kirgheez of a tall figure, dressed in a silk *khalaat* and small scull-cap embroidered with gold, approached my bed, and addressed me in pretty good Russian: "What do you want? Are you better?" "I am cold," replied I; "and want to eat or drink something hot. Order me to be unbound and dressed in some warm clothing." "Now you are surely well, when you want to eat," said the tall Kirgheez. He sent away the females, and ordered two Kirgheez to take off the sheep-skin, to wash me and rub me with some strong ointment resembling gall, and cover me with *khalaats*, which was immediately executed. I wished to stand upon my legs, but from weakness fell down on my bed. In the meantime a young woman brought me a bowl of soup made with rice, and after drinking the strengthening liquid, I felt that my blood took a regular course, and that my strength returned. After I had satisfied my hunger, I fell asleep, and the tall Kirgheez perceiving this, ordered all to go out of the tent, saying: "Don't disturb yourself, but grow well. God is great in the clouds, and the *steppe* is not without good people!"

I fell asleep at sunset, and awoke at sunrise; raised my head first, then stood up, and was very glad that I was able to stand on my feet. With difficulty I managed to get out of the tent. On seeing the sun and

the cloudless sky, I threw myself on my knees, and, with tears in my eyes, thanked God for delivering me from such a dangerous illness, and preserving my life. A strange scene appeared before me. The tents were erected on the shore of a lake; all around was seen the boundless *steppe*, and, in the midst of some few bushes, a numerous herd of sheep, horses, camels, and horned cattle was feeding. Men and women were occupied in working: some were milking cows and mares,—others were spreading out felt,—a third party was lighting fires and carrying water,—others were slaughtering sheep and horses. The talking and crying of people was mingled with the neighing of horses, the lowing of cows, and the bleating of sheep. I guessed that I was in a Kirgheezian encampment, but could not conjecture how I had come there. My last recollection was confined to my meeting with Groonya, and arrival at my lodgings. After that, I thought that I was not alive, and that I had risen from the dead in a Kirgheezian tent. The tall Kirgheez in the silk *khalaat* was standing beside his tent, which was larger and handsomer than the rest. He was smoking tobacco, and looking all around him. On seeing me, he ordered one of his attendants to bring me to him. Guessing that he must be the chief, I made a bow to him, and begged permission to sit on the ground on account of my weakness. The chief ordered felt to be brought and placed under me; and he himself, sitting on a carpet opposite to me, said, “You must know, Ivan, that you are my slave. I am the chief of a renowned division of the Kirgheezian horde.

My name is Arsalan Sultan. Serve me faithfully if you wish to live happily. If I observe in you any desire to run away, I will sell you, or have you slaughtered like a sheep."—This unanswerable speech did not afford over-much consolation to me on my recovery, but I had no alternative, and replied, with feigned equanimity, "I will serve you faithfully, and, though I have not yet been able to be of any service to you, I make free to ask you one favour, as a pledge of what may follow: tell me in what manner I fell into your hands? I was so unwell that I do not recollect what has happened to me."—"As it is your wish, I shall tell you. I was in Orenburg upon business three weeks ago. On leaving town in the evening, I turned from the main road in order to regain the *steppe* by a by-way known to us, and saw two armed men who were taking something out of a cart. There were only four of my countrymen with me to lead my camels; the rest had gone on before us. Fearing that the Cossacks of the frontier might hear the report of our fire-arms, I did not chuse to fall upon the robbers, who were quarrelling with one another what was to be done with you. A tall flatfaced man with cropped hair wished to cut off your head; another palefaced thin man advised him to throw you on the ground, to avoid the shedding of blood, saying that without their aid you would soon give up the ghost. I heard their conversation at a distance, owing to the wind. They were frightened when I made up to them, and very glad when I declared that I did not wish to raise any brawl with them so near the town, and designed to

free them from farther trouble, by taking with me the person about whose fate they were quarrelling. The rascals consented, and gave you up to me on condition that I should not permit you to write to Russia to procure your ransom. I promised to do so, and they returned to the town. You lay in the heat of a fever, without feeling, wrapped up in a blanket. I immediately ordered two of our spare sheep to be slaughtered, wrapped * you up naked in their wet hides, and packed you up amongst the baggage on a camel. The wet skins, and a powder made from the dried legs of the bird Teelegoose, † which I always carry about with me, because it is also a remedy for the bite of mad dogs, kept alive the vital spark in your body. On our arrival in the camp, at my wives' request, I called in the most skilful *Baxa*, ‡ ordered him to try his skill upon you, and play upon the *Ko-beez*, || as long as your disease continued, changing the skins always for fresh ones of other animals, sometimes twice or thrice a-day. My wives fed you with gruel made of rice, and a decoction of the herb sheeraz; § and at length it pleased God and his prophet to spare you, for the honour and glory of serving me, Sultan Arsalan ! I pitied your youth ; your life now

* This is a Kirgheezian remedy.

† A bird resembling a partridge.

‡ *Baxa* is the same as the Siberian *Shamaun*, a prophet and surgeon.

|| A sort of guitar or fiddle, without an upper board. They play on it with a bow as on a violoncello. The *Baxas* make use of this instrument while engaged in prophesying.

§ A plant growing in the *steppe*, made use of for exciting perspiration.

belongs to me, and you must for ever give up all hopes of seeing again your native land. But tell me, who were those robbers who wished to murder you, and what was the reason of their enmity?"—After first thanking Arsalan Sultan for the care which he had taken of me, and renewing the assurances of my fidelity, I related to him in what manner I had left Moscow with Vorovaateen, in order to meet with Groonya; how I fell in with Nojoff, and overheard his conversation; and at last, how I learned Groonya's treachery, and after that fell into a fever from mental distraction. I declared to my new master that I suspected no one of a design to murder me, except Vorovaateen and Nojoff; but what tempted them to plot my destruction I could not tell, because I could not unriddle it myself. I could not believe that those rascals would have thought it worth their while to murder me for the sake of the few hundred roubles of mine which Vorovaateen had with him, on pretence of taking charge of them.—"It is a pity," said Arsalan Sultan, "that I did not cut off from the face of the earth such heartless villains, who could employ their strength and courage against a poor sick youth: if they fall within my grasp another time, I shall leave their bones to dry on the *steppe*, and give their carcases for a nest to serpents, which are much better than they. Look ye, Ivan, till you gather strength I do not ask you to work. My wives will give you meat and drink, and then we shall see what you are fit for."—Arsalan Sultan's family consisted of three wives and four children,—three daughters, from five to seven

years of age, and one son about my time of life. All the three wives were young and pretty. If the rule were to be admitted that narrow eyes and prominent cheek-bones are no deformity, then Arsalan Sultan's wives would have been beauties, even in an European capital; and he himself, although he was beyond forty, might deserve the name of the Kirgheezian Apollo. His son was born of his fourth wife, who no longer existed: but the young Gayuk experienced kindness and attention from all his three stepmothers,—a happiness of which step-sons cannot always boast in more polished communities. My master was fortunate in his family. His wives lived on friendly terms with one another, had cheerful tempers, and endeavoured to please their husband as far as they could. He was very affable in his demeanour towards his servants, and they loved me like their own brother. I was indebted to them indeed for my recovery.

Autumn came on, and we prepared to break up our encampment in search of winter quarters. Arsalan Sultan dispatched messengers to such of the neighbouring *aools** as were inhabited by his friends, to give notice of his shifting his quarters, and of the direction which he meant to take in the *steppe*. On the return of the messengers, all the baggage was packed up into different bales, the tents were struck, and the loads were put upon the backs of camels and baggage-horses, and on a given signal they formed into order for marching. Every family formed a separate divi-

* *Aool* is the Tartar name for an encampment.

sion. The children, old women, young girls, old men and sick, were seated on camels; and all the men capable of bearing arms, and all the young women, were on horse-back, in their best apparel, as if it were an extraordinary holiday. The front, rear, and flanks of the caravan were covered by troops of horsemen armed with pikes, spears, sabres, and match-locks. The flocks and herds formed a separate detachment within sight of the caravan. When all was ready for marching, Arsalan Sultan ordered the *Baxa* to begin his divination on the success of their undertaking. The *Baxa* advanced in front, took a knife out of his belt, drew a circle round about him, with a stick, in the sand, and then, holding his knife to his throat, began to sing loudly. His singing was accompanied with outrageous screams and roars, which soon exhausted all his strength. He fell down like a lifeless corpse, his breathing was hardly discernible, and he apparently slept. The whole *aoöl* looked upon this prophetic farce, with silence and devotion. In a quarter of an hour the *Baxa* began to move, and to speak as if in his sleep. Arsalan Sultan and the other elders attentively listened to his words, and concluded from them that we should have a prosperous journey. The exhausted *Baxa* was seated on a camel, and on a signal being given, we advanced. I was stationed beside Arsalan Sultan on an unbroken horse, and was dressed in the Kirgheezian fashion. By particular favour, and in compliance with the request of his wives, he made me his armour-bearer, or properly speaking, his military attendant. My duty consisted in holding his

horse, when he dismounted, handing him Kumeez,* filling his pipe, cleaning his musket, waiting at dinner, and amusing him with stories and songs. During the time of our first march, Arsalan moved to some distance from his people, and calling me to him, said: "You have seen something of our manner of life, Ivan, and I hope that you do not wish now to exchange our *steppes* for your own smoky towns, where people collect together to cheat one another, and contrive necessities which make them the slaves of all possible follies, and set them a crawling and fawning before every one who has it in his power to elevate them in the eyes of fools, and invest them with riches of which they know not either the value or the measure? What does man want?—To have his fill of meat and drink, to be clothed and comfortable. All this you will find with us. Without labour and trouble, you have your food and clothing from our flocks and herds, we do not bother our heads about the future, and we are always ready to repel force by force if molested by any enemy or false friend among our neighbours: we prefer our arms to stratagems, lying and cheating, the weapons used by your inhabitants of towns. You value the beauty of your towns by the breadth of the streets, by their extent, by the greatness of the buildings. Our temple is the open heaven, our city the boundless *steppe* where there is no want of room, and where neither wall nor fence controuls our liberty. I have been in Moscow and Petersburg,

* Strong drink made from fermented Mare's milk.

have seen all your wonders, and have been astonished to see wise people occupied with play-things and baubles, and sacrificing their health and peace merely in order to be always shut up in a splendid cage, whether in rest or motion, and to fill their stomachs with exotic dainties. I have taken a liking for you, Ivan, I wish to make you an experienced horseman, and shall teach you to manage a horse and a musket. If you should fancy any Kirgheezian girl, I shall be your spokesman, and shall do my endeavour to furnish your establishment." I thanked him for his kind disposition towards me, and added: "In my condition there is no choice left, and at all events I would rather be a warrior than a slave." After this, Arsalan Sultan ordered his horsemen to shew me their art.

He threw small pieces of Russian money on the ground, and his vaulters picked it up while at the full gallop: they rode with their feet on the saddle, stood upon it on their head, hit with their lances in the air stones thrown over their heads, wrapped up in dry grass; they took off one another's caps and wrestled on horseback. The art and address of the Kirgheez in the management of horses, and in all military exercises enraptured me, and I begged Arsalan Sultan to have me taught as soon as possible the trade of a horseman. "Confess, Ivan," said he to me, "that that accomplishment is much more suitable for a man, than your melancholy movements of the legs to music, your hopping and whirling about, in which your youth shew off at what you call balls. I have seen your amusements, and have fallen asleep at them from ennui.

I observed, brother, that at first you unwillingly consented to become a Kirgheezian warrior, but I am persuaded that in time, when once your head gets cleared of the town-smoke, you will not part from us." In the meantime we arrived at our night-quarters. Before a lazy driver would have finished unharnessing his horses, our camels were already unloaded, the tents pitched, a fire made of dried bushes, and our kettles boiling. The women were employed in making ready our repast and milking cows and mares; the men formed a stationary guard and patrol for our outposts. At the fires, joyous songs were going on, and piping on the *Kobeez* and *Tchebeezga*.* The sky was clear and studded with stars, and the air mild. Arsalan, while waiting for supper, was sitting before his tent on his saddle, and calling me to him, "Ivan," said he, "you speak in many tongues, therefore you know better than I, how to learn them. But, as we have neither books, nor schools, nor school-masters, I would advise you to learn Kirgheezian, and that cleverly. Ask the name of every thing, and chatter boldly what you know, without thinking of being laughed at. Necessity teaches more quickly than a master for money. To learn the language, I advise you to fall in love. That is the very best and most successful method. It was love which was my best schoolmaster in learning Russian. I shall tell you about that sometime. But know that in order to be a complete horseman, it is

* Pipes or flutes made of wood or reed, about 23 inches long.

not sufficient to know how to manage a horse and fire-arms, and to understand the language of our people : it is necessary also to know how to read on the heavens like a book. I myself will undertake that branch of your education." At these words I interrupted Arsalan's speech, and said to him : " How ! you surely do not wish to make a *Baxa* or prophet of me ? " Arsalan smiled. " I believe the predictions of the *Baxa* no more than you do," said he ; " but we have nothing to do with that : living in the *steppes* where fortunately people are not tied to one place like trees, we ought to know the marks by which we can wend our way day and night. By day our guides are the *Koorgans*,* the tombs erected above our deceased brethren, and bushes, lakes, rivers, elevations, and also the colour of the *steppe* ; and in the night-time, the sky. Do you see that clear star ? That is *Temeer kazeek* (the polar star,) the iron pole. It is always seen in the quarter whence winter and cold winds come. There the sun rests. On the right from *Temeer kazeek* the sun rises : opposite it stands at mid-day, and sets on the left. That star serves us in place of the case with the dart which you call the compass. There is *Tchooban Dgooldoos*,† (the shepherd's star,) which shews the time for driving the cattle from the pasture to the encampment, and for driving them back again. There is *Arcar*,‡ (the wild sheep :) these stars are hid in winter, and their return in spring corresponds with the reappearance of the fresh vegetation.

* Cairns or barrows.

† Venus.

‡ The Pleiades.

But I do not wish to perplex you at present with a multitude of names. Learn to know the heavens and the earth, that you may stand in need of nothing but your own manhood." The night passed on favourably, and we by sunrise struck our tents and continued our march. After continuing our march in the same order for about ten days, we halted at the foot of a hill, which separates the rest of the *steppe* from the north, and we took up our quarters in the neighbourhood of a rivulet. As the old men, from different signs, foretold a hard winter, we began earlier than usual to construct double-felted tents, and to prepare a quantity of wood, reeds, and dry bushes. Of provisions we provided mostly dried flesh, and a drink made of soured rye-flour, similar to the wort used in distilleries.

In the meantime, by Arsalan Sultan's orders, I was daily taught the military business and horsemanship. They began by tying me to an unbroken horse, and launching me into the *steppe*, in order to drive out of me as they said my town-tameness. They would not give me any meat but what they placed on the ground; and I was obliged to procure my dinner by lifting it while sitting on my horse, first at a pace, then at the trot, and lastly at full gallop. Flour cakes baked on the coals, which are with them the greatest delicacy, I had to pick up on the point of my lance, at full gallop; and they would not allow me to partake of game till I was myself able to hunt the antelope on horseback, and knock it down with my whip. They would not allow me to ride except at full speed. In this way, by the time that

the frosts came on, I had become a tolerable horse-man, by following the simple rule, 'necessity forms a stone.'

CHAPTER XIV.

Arsalan Sultan's relation of his adventures in Russia.

Snow fell, and the Kirgheez spent the greater part of their time in their tents, sitting around their fires, and listening to story-tellers. Our flocks and herds were all this time in the open plain, and fed upon the herbage under the snow. Except the driving of cattle from place to place, watching them, and the making ready of the victuals which consisted more of flesh during the winter season, we had no other work. The Kirgheez during their inactivity give themselves up to the pleasures of imagination. Their tales are full of the marvellous and supernatural, and have always for their subject some horseman, who in his wanderings through the *steppe*, fights with tyrants and oppressors of the fair sex, and with magicians, hunts after beauties, robs rich caravans, and at last returns to his *aool*, and reposes on his laurels. Love is always the chief topic of these stories : their songs also breathe the tender passion and heroism. Understanding enough of the Kirgheezian language to be sensible of the monotonous nature of these tales, I grew soon wearied of them, and one evening begged Arsalan Sultan to relate his real adventures. He made good his promise. In the following narrative, the thoughts alone belong to Arsalan Sultan, as it is ob-

vious that, after such a lapse of time, it would be impossible for me to retain the originality of the Kirgheezian idiom. Arsalan spoke Russian with some few mistakes, but not more than we frequently meet with in the conversation of such of our grandees as have received from their cradle a foreign education. He related as follows:—

“It is so ordained, that man, gifted as he is with an immortal soul, should exceed in wickedness and obduracy all irrational creatures; and, not content with treading and feeding upon other animals, should direct his incessant endeavours towards the oppression of his fellows. You see, Ivan, that we in our *aool* live in peace and concord like brethren of the same family; but do not suppose that this friendship and this love extends to all our race. No! every branch, every horde are at enmity amongst themselves: an injury done in another *aool*, or another horde, to a single Kirgheez, creates a breach between all his *aool* or horde. That is a general case or *baranta*, although only a common custom, but it is stronger than any law: for you may remark, that people are readier in calling into use their wicked propensities or personal advantages than the rules of wisdom.

“My father, besides being a favourite of the Khan, was also one of his relations; but our Khans are powerless, and my father could not by means of his protection shield himself from the vengeance of a powerful Sultan who commanded the tribes of Tcheezleck and Dertkarik, who are the bitterest enemies of Russia. The pretence for this quarrel was my fa-

ther's having received presents from the Russian Court; but the enmity was in reality occasioned by the preference shewn by my mother to my father, when she had been courted by the two suitors. Frequent inroads and pillagings on the part of his enemies obliged my father to retire from the heart of the *steppe* to the Russian frontiers, and beg assistance in powder and fire-arms from the Russians. As a pledge of his fidelity and devotion to Russia, my father delivered me with several other young people as hostages, wishing me to see the world, and observe the arrangements of civilized countries, and be at the same time useful to my countrymen by my acquired knowledge.

"I was then about your years, Ivan. We were sent to Moscow, where a superintendant was set over us, that is, a government officer, whose duty consisted in providing for our maintenance at the expense of the crown, in accompanying me everywhere, shewing me what was curious, and looking after our behaviour. This officer, who had lived long on the Orenburg line, knew something of our language. From Moscow we were sent to Petersburgh, where the government gave us a Tartar interpreter and a Russian teacher.

"I confess to you, that the splendour of luxury, the display and appearance of universal contentment, had at first a powerful effect upon me, and excited a desire either to remain for the rest of my days an inhabitant of that city, or to build a town on my own territories, and follow the same arrangement.

"My curiosity could not be sated. I wished to see and know every thing, and cried from vexation if I

could not reach what I saw, or understand what I heard.

“ The Empress, Catherine the Second, was pleased to express a wish to see me. I was elegantly dressed, and brought in a coach and six to the palace. With pride I surveyed the mob from the carriage windows and fancied that the eyes of the whole metropolis were upon me, because all who were passing at the time made a stand, and from curiosity stared at me. On proceeding through one street, we could not get on for the immense crowd which blocked up the street, and put questions about me to the superintendent. On a sudden we heard the sounds of music, and monkeys were seen at the open windows of a neighbouring house. The mob, without waiting to hear what the superintendent had to say, ran to the monkeys, and we went on quietly. This was the first shock to my self-esteem, and I formed a very low opinion of a mob which preferred monkeys to the son of a sultan. I did not at that time find out that it is as difficult to keep steady the attention of any mob as it is to fix the wind, and that fear is their only never-failing remembrancer.

* “ The Empress received me very graciously, caressed me, gave me presents, and sent me home, giving the grantees of her court particular charge concerning me, with orders to take me into society, in order that I might form a better judgment of the advantages of civilization. The Empress’s notice brought me into fashion, like a new arrangement of the hair or a new cut of a coat. In the city there was no ball, great

dinner, or rout, where the handsome Kirgheez was not present. This name was given me by the leaders of the *ton*, because it had been said at court, "This little prince is not so ugly as the Kirgheez are generally represented." Gentlemen and ladies of quality were amused with my simplicity, and I was amused with their talkativeness, and the stupidity with which they took great things for small, and small things for great. One day I found a worthy family in tears and grief; all were weeping, from the father to the child at the breast. "What has happened to you?" I asked the landlady.—"Ah! my dear prince, you knew our uncle."—"What of him? Is he dead?"—"If he were only dead it would not be half so bad, because he has already begun to squander his property, which my children should inherit; but he—ah!—he has lost the good graces of his powerful patron!"—"What was the cause of this disaster?"—"The indiscreet use of his tongue. Our uncle's patron prided himself on having invented a new fish-sauce; my uncle told his friends in a secret that it was his invention, and after that, good-bye to friendship and patronage."—I could not refrain from laughing, and this laugh was ascribed to my ignorance and wildness.—Another time, I found, in despair, a friend of mine, a well-educated youth. He wanted to shoot himself,—wanted to run away to the Kirgheezian *steppe*, to hide himself from the world.—"What misfortune preys upon your mind, my worthy friend?" I asked.—"My dear prince, my father has cursed me!"—"How! your father cursed you! you have

surely committed some crime to disgrace your father." "I did not play into his hand at boston."—"How? and for that he has cursed you."—"Cursed me, and banished me from his favour!"—I laughed heartily. "Be consoled, my worthy friend: that damnation will not go up to heaven, but will remain at the card-table till some clever fellow turn the tables upon him, that good people may have a laugh at the expense of a conceited papa."—"The affair in question is not in heaven but on earth," returned my friend; "the consequences of that damnation are—I am cut off from all pecuniary aid. My father is glad now that he has found an opportunity to deny me money."—"Why does your father take such care of his money?"—"To give meat and drink to a crowd of interlopers, who laugh in his face at his folly; prize his exotic wines and rich dishes, as if they were proofs of wisdom and beneficent qualities—in fine, of every thing worthy of a gentleman."—"As you like it; but you appear to me quite laughable with your unreasonable customs," said I to my friend.—"What is fun to one is grief to another," replied he.

"What appeared to me the strangest of all, was the estimation of people received into the higher circles. There, neither wit nor mental endowments nor behaviour were of any consideration.

"The first question regularly was, 'How many souls has he?' The second, 'What rank?' The third, 'Of what family?' The fourth, 'Of what connections?' If all these points answered the expectations formed, or if only one point was sufficiently

powerful to overbalance the deficiency of the others—no matter whether the man should be a rogue, a cheat, a robber, an oppressor—the doors of all houses were open to him, a smile was always on the face on meeting him, and a fresh invitation when he went away. But money—oh! for money! An unbrushed, unrubbed boor, who some years before has been retailing *vodky* to footmen and coachmen, and grown rich by cheating, is received in the houses of these gentry better than a poor warrior who has no other recommendation than his services. But your dinners! your dinners put me beside myself: like dogs, who fawn upon those who feed them, your enlightened people, for a savoury dish or a bottle of wine which they otherwise might have at home, crowd the house of every rascal, every robber, and not only pardon his want of conscience but screen him from justice. In your courts of law, some play at blindman's buff, and in their eagerness lay hold of right or wrong; others sell justice by the weight, like physic in the apothecaries' shops, according to the recipes of secretaries and lawyers. In a word, I was convinced that your civilization consists in the art of speaking and writing what is useful to others, and of doing what is useful to self. Words and actions with you stand so contrasted, that if any one say of himself, "I am an honest man," that denotes that he is a rogue: whoever says, "I am rich," means that he is poor, that is, in debt; but when one declares himself, and cries out everywhere that he is poor, that denotes that he is rich, but wishes to be still richer. Whenever a man cries

out about the public welfare, it is a sign that he is seeking private advantages to himself; and he who preaches up freedom, shews that he wants to subject others. On considering all these contradictions for the course of four years, I compared your civilization and advantages of a city life with our independence and ignorance, and felt a strong desire to return to the *steppe*, and forget, like a dream, every thing which I had seen and heard. I had already made up my mind to ask for permission, when I was on a sudden kept back by an unforeseen obstacle,—that is to say, love.

“As is the usual custom in Russia, the lodgings hired for us wild Asiatics, were in a distant part of the town, in order that we might more freely carry on our religious exercises and make ready our victuals according to our fashion, without exciting the attention of the curious. One day, as I was passing on foot through a quiet lane, I heard in a poor looking dwelling the sighs and pitiful cries of some female. By an involuntary emotion I ran into the house. A mournful spectacle appeared before my eyes. A young woman, beautiful as an angel, held in her arms an old woman who was in a fit of fainting, and wept in despair, not knowing how to assist her. I, without speaking a word, ran into the passage, and finding a bucket of water, returned into the room with a mugful, sprinkled the sick woman's face, and rubbed her temples, and the veins of her arms, and at last brought her to her senses, laid her on a bed, and asked leave of the fair maid to run immediately for a doctor. I thought that the girl at first did not perceive me, being so absorbed

with the thoughts of her mother's distress, but at last she turned towards me her beautiful azure eyes in which the tears were still visible, and blushing, thanked me in a soft tone of voice. My Kirgheezian dress put the fair maid into confusion ; she looked at me with stolen glimpses from head to foot, and did not know what to say. "Don't be frightened, madam," said I. "I am a Kirgheez, a native of the wild *steppes* ; but the Kirgheez have also hearts, and they know what compassion is for a neighbour's misfortune. Be open with me as with a man who regards as a rich prize every opportunity of being useful to the suffering and unfortunate. I see that you are in want ; that is expressed in your dwelling. Oblige me by taking this small help for your sick mother." Without waiting for the fair maid's answer, I threw on the table a purse of ducats and went away in haste. The girl wished to keep me by the hand, begged me to take back the money ; but without listening to her, I plucked myself away by force, and ran home instantly. I had seen many Russian beauties, yet they never had made any powerful impression upon me. But the image of that poor girl was imprinted on my heart and memory. She was day and night present in my imagination, and I was tormented more than a week, not knowing what to do with myself, and not daring to return to her house, dreading that she might return me the money, and thus deprive herself of what she stood so much in need. In vain I endeavoured to forget the fair maid : she however kept possession of me like life or soul, and my Asiatic blood boiled as if a flame burned within my

heart. Neither the amusements of the great world, nor reading, of which I was very fond, nor solitude, could quiet me. At last, I resolved to see her again. I went thither in the evening. An incomprehensible shyness kept me back at the door. I stopped beside the window which was closed and the shutters on, and overheard a dispute in the room, and a voice which I did not know. "Be ashamed of yourself, be ashamed of yourself!" said the woman. "How dare you propose dishonour to me in barter for your protection which I despise. Look at my daughter; she cannot pronounce a word from excess of indignation, and does not wish to debase herself by ignominy. We are poor, and unprotected, and destitute, and that is the reason why you are so presumptuous; but if my husband had been alive, he would, notwithstanding your riches and rank, know how to make you think again." "Have done, have done, mother, don't be offended," replied a tremulous voice; "it would be much better for you to give me your daughter to be brought up under my protection, than to marry her to any petty-fogging clerk or non-commissioned officer. And you, my little beauty, don't be shy: come hither, and allow me to kiss those rosy cheeks." "Leave me in peace!" screamed the fair maid, and I heard the noise of a table upset. The thoughts of oppressed innocence excited my wrath; like a madman I flew into the room, and saw a shabby-looking old man, dressed like a fop, pulling about the girl, and attempting to kiss her against her inclination. I took hold of him by the waist, carried him like a bag of straw into the yard,

and threw him on the dirt. Two footmen standing at the corner of the house, ran on their master's calling for assistance, and fell upon me. But despair and fury redoubled my strength. I took a billet of wood in each arm, fell upon my antagonists, and drove them out at the gate. The old debauchee fled to his carriage which stood at the corner of the street, and called his servants to him. I soon heard the sound of the carriage moving along the street at full speed ; I shut the wicket and returned to the room. The tears of gratitude were my recompense. The mother thanked me for the kindness and protection which I had shewn them ; the daughter was silent, but her silence was more eloquent than the words of the old woman. The old lady told me her history. Her husband had served as a commissary in the fleet, and was an honest man. After his death he left his family no other property but the right to receive a small sum from the treasury for a prize which had been taken by the crew of the vessel in which he served. His successor presented some claims against the deceased, in illustration of the proverb, that ' the dead and absent are always to blame.' The business at this time was brought before that baneful old man, who, on seeing Sophia, proposed to her to purchase by her dishonour a favourable decision and his protection for the future. Of course, his offer was rejected with a disdain peculiar to noble minds ; but the old man did not put an end to his persecutions; and even began to threaten the unfortunate mother, that he would imprison her for spending property belonging to government, if her

daughter did not comply with his wishes. When I found the mother in a fit, it was in consequence of these tidings. The mother and daughter lived by their manual industry, doing work for the *magazins de modes*; but the stubborn old creature, to reduce them to extremities, deprived the poor unfortunate family even of this means of subsistence, by paying the shop-keepers expressly not to buy any thing from Sophia, or give her any work. Poverty, one of the greatest misfortunes, the general object of dislike amongst civilized nations, soon visited the worthy family; and, if I had not come to their assistance, Sophia would have hired herself to weed in a garden, in order to procure subsistence for her sick and weakly mother: for except the clothes which she had on, every thing was sold. I never in my life had shed tears, and for the first time wept at the relation of the old woman's miseries. "Allow me to interfere in this business," said I. "If I do not find justice amongst the *grandeess*, I shall find it at a higher source." "Do not think of that, my good Prince," replied the old lady. "Before the sun is up, the dew corrodes the eyes."* We intend not to pursue the business farther, but to retire to some relations of ours who live in a distant town. If you have any acquaintances, beg them only to prevent that gentleman whom you saw here, from persecuting us. His name is Pherooolken, and he has the rank of general. But I beseech you, do not go to him, for he may make you repent your

* Russian proverb.

rashness. In the meantime, take your money back ; we cannot receive in a present such a large sum." " You may give the money back when you receive from the treasury what is due you : as to what regards Mr. Pheroolken, don't be apprehensive ; I do not fear him." After remaining some time with these unfortunate people, I returned home, more in love with Sophia than before. Next morning, I went to the court where Pheroolken sat, and waited him on the stair-case. He was astonished to see me, and probably would have changed countenance if he had been able. But he had not a drop of blood in his whole body. " What do you please, my dear prince ?" said he nodding. " To speak alone with you." " Shall be very glad, but this is not the proper place. Please to call upon me to-morrow morning at nine o'clock. I shall receive you with pleasure." Next day, I was at the appointed hour in Pheroolken's lobby. The footmen had orders to admit me ; but as there were several petitioners in the hall, and the secretary was busy in the cabinet, the valet took me to an inner room through Pheroolken's dressing room. On passing through, I involuntarily stopped to look at things which I had not seen before. " What is the use of those two stitched bags with strings ?" asked I.— " These are the calves of my master's legs," replied the footman. " But what bird's nest is that ?"— " That is his hair !" " But those bones ?" " That is his teeth." " But what are those paints on the table amongst the brushes, powder and pomatum ?" " That is the colouring of my master's face." " Good !" said

I, laughing : "in him there is neither body nor soul !" "I beg your pardon," answered the valet. "He has three thousand souls ; these are of more weight than one of his own." I understood the drift of the wily valet's jest, and concluded from that, that Pherooken must be a disagreeable man in all points of view when his own servants have no respect for him. I was called into the closet ; Pherooken took me by the hand, and very kindly begged me to be seated. "Let us forget the past," said he ; "you behaved very rudely towards me, but I forgive you, as you are not acquainted with the rules of civil society. In our country you may murder or shoot a man, but you must not touch him with your naked hands. Besides, you had no reason for being angry with me. I was in quest of game the same as you, and did not know that the pigeon had been first brought down by you." "I beg you will speak without circumlocution," said I raising my voice. "I have only seen twice in my life the poor girl whom you are persecuting, and am resolved to protect her from mere sympathy." "Sympathy in the Kirgheezian *steppe* !" archly replied Pherooken. "There is more of it there, than in your gilded palaces and courts of law," replied I seriously. "But however that may be, if you do not give up persecuting Sophia, and decide in the affair concerning her deceased father according to law, I swear to you by my life and fortune, that I shall fall at the feet of our just Empress, and will lodge a complaint against you ; and in the meantime I will inform all the grandes and people about the court of our meeting at Sophia's."

"Be quiet, be quiet, and don't get into a passion!" said Pheroolken. "Even without that, it would be a pleasure to me to oblige the Kirgheezeian prince. I give you my word of honour, that I shall think no more of your Sophia, and to-morrow shall subscribe the decision in favour of her mother, as the business is already gone through. Let it be a bargain between us. Not a whisper to any one." "Here is my hand to you!" Pheroolken embraced me, and with haste conducted me out of the closet. I flew to Sophia with the joyful news, and was again overloaded with caresses and thankfulness. Next day the decision was subscribed, and in a week the money was paid. Pheroolken no more appeared in that quarter of the town where Sophia lived. He kept his word—I suppose for the first time in his life. I ceased to think of returning to the *steppe*. Sophia loved me and was happy, and lived a new life. We concealed our love from her mother, because she would never have consented on any consideration to let her daughter marry a Mahomedan. I did not know what to resolve upon. The death of her mother gave Sophia full liberty to dispose of herself. The good old woman, weighed down with years and griefs, died, half a year after our first acquaintance. Sophia remained an orphan, and declared to me that she was ready to follow me not only to the *steppe* but to the world's end, to an unpeopled wilderness.

"It was necessary to take some precautions. Sophia went before me to Orenburg, and after obtaining leave from the Empress, I set off afterwards. Not knowing whether my father would allow me to marry

a poor orphan, I left Sophia in a neighbouring *aoöl*, with a friend, and appeared before my father alone. "Father," said I, "you have experienced what love is, and surely will not condemn your son if he chooses a wife for himself according to his heart's desire, and not according to calculation." "I would have wished you to marry a daughter of the Sultan, my benefactor," said my father to me; "but if you have already fixed your eyes upon a bride, and do not wish any more wives, do as you please. You know it is not I, but yourself that have to live with your wife!" I related my adventure to him, and the same day Sophia was in his arms. Our old women were angry, because I had married a foreigner. The young girls were not pleased; but my brave horsemen agreed that Sophia was worthy of being a Kirgheez. The Khan himself was desirous of seeing my wife, and applauded my choice —"

Arsalan ceased speaking, and covered his face with his hands. I saw his tears. At last he said: "I was happy ten years with Sophia. Gayuk is the fruit of our love. She died! According to the custom of our nation, and by order of the Khan, I was obliged to marry again. I have now three wives; they are good women; you know them. But I loved Sophia alone, and have never consoled myself for her loss. Ivan! believe me, in the Kirgheezian *steppe* love and friendship are known, although they cannot tell fine stories about them. Now you know why I love the Russians. Sophia unites me with you. This is why, in spite of our usual custom, I behave to you my slave as if you were my equal. I was happy with a Russian. Rus-

sian blood runs in the veins of my Gayuk; and, although I saw many follies in your country, that is the general lot of all civilized nations, as I learned from books; and you are only to blame, because you import foreign follies. I found many good people in Russia, worthy to live with us in these *steppes*, and their memory is dear to me. Now go to sleep, Ivan! I am sick at heart; I shall sit on my horse and dissipate my grief in the *steppe*. The recollection of past miseries consoles a man; but the remembrance of bygone joys never to return, fills the heart with anguish—adieu! Hey! my horse!” Arsalan leaped upon his stallion, and rode off in the moonlight at full gallop. I grew melancholy myself. I loved the worthy Sultan with all my heart.

CHAPTER XV.

Consequences of a hard Winter in the Steppe—Attack—Joyful Meeting with my first benefactor.

WE live in a continual illusion, and see objects only as they appear in the magic mirror of the passions. But if illusion is pardonable in a man, it is only so when he does not see the faults of his parents and his father-land. For as much as the noble Arsalan endeavoured to convince me of the superior excellence of his own *steppe*, neither the eloquence of his polished mind nor the simplicity of the wild children of nature could make me forget Russia. The winter redoubled my melancholy: living in a *yoort* with Gayuk and several of his companions, and finding no relief but in the conversation of Arsalan, I grew weary in the long evenings, and thought about my country and my good aunt, who would be no doubt in despair when she learned that I had disappeared without any accounts of me. The coarse diet, dirtiness, and smoke in the *yoorts*, and the hard frost in the *steppe* where we had to patrol and to look after the cattle, were vexatious to me, and made me feel more powerfully what I had left. At last the frost increased to an incredible degree. Our cattle could not get from under the snow the herbage, which, on this occasion, lost its nourishing quality. The drift covered the cattle

with snow, and the piercing cold winds stopped the breath of every living thing.

At last misery made its appearance, the greatest of all to a pastoral tribe—the distemper amongst the cattle. In vain the *Baxas* employed their divinations and nostrums: our flocks and herds diminished continually, and there was no means to put a stop to the distemper. Besides, the healthy animals stumbling amongst the snow-hillocks, and not having strength to grub up the deep and hard snow, fell from exhaustion. This was accompanied with a deficiency of provision and fire-wood. Despair pervaded all our hearts. In place of merry songs, were heard the whistling of winds and the moans of dying animals. The women and children concealed their tears before their husbands and fathers, but an artificial equanimity could not conceal the general grief. Arsalan displayed more courage than all the rest. He induced us to work by his example. He himself presided at our common labours and roused up the desponding; he himself dug for food for the riding horses from under the heaps of snow; he himself rode with us for reeds and the twigs of young trees; he himself looked after the cattle, and assigned new places of pasture for them. Fearing lest the distemper should deprive us of all our live stock, we slaughtered the greater part of our sheep, and buried the flesh in the ground, using our dry provisions with the greatest economy. Fortunately the rich Kirgheez had laid in a stock of brick-tea,* which

* The commonest and cheapest sort of tea, which is used

we drank several times in the day, preparing it at first like soup with milk, butter, and salt, and afterwards when there was not enough of milk and butter, simply with salt and sheep's fat. This beverage kept up my strength. The rye-flour which Arsalan Sultan had provided at Orenburg, served only for a dainty.—The Kirgheez do not make use of bread, but boil a sort of porridge with flour, and bake cakes on the coals. Only one Sultan had rice and that in small quantity. Wheat was kept for the women and unwell persons. Although we did not as yet experience real famine, with the loss of our cattle, that misery threatened us in spring.

At last, winter passed away, the snow thawed, verdure again appeared upon the earth, the distemper ceased, but we remained poor. Without external aid, famine would steal upon us before the end of the spring. All this was foreseen, but nobody knew what to resolve upon. Some advised to enter into the Russian service, for pay ; others wished to ask assistance from the Khan. Arsalan intended to conquer our misfortune by force of arms. One day he called an assembly of the elders ; and when all were seated on the ground and were smoking their pipes, he pronounced the following speech:—"It is my duty to care for you. I do what I can ; but in all this, it was out of my power to shorten the frost or put a stop to the

mostly in Siberia by the Mongolian tribes. It is sold in pieces of a form similar to bricks, and in the frontier towns of China is used as a substitute for money. Goods are valued by the number of these pieces of tea.

distemper. I do not wish to conceal from you that a still greater misfortune threatens us. Our enemies, learning our weakness and wants, will fall upon us, and cut us all off, or make us their slaves. It is only desperate courage which can save us. It is better to prevent misery by combating evident dangers, than with littleness of mind to wait the shock.* I have received intelligence that a rich caravan is on its way through the *steppe*, and that the enemy of our tribe, Sultan Alteen, escorts the caravan with his best horsemen. Let us mount our horses and go to meet them, beat them, take the caravan, and, by one hardy movement, deliver ourselves both from the enemy and from famine. This is my design. Make it known to my horsemen. Let him who does not fear death, and who wishes to save his race from destruction and misery, follow me: I will take none but volunteers." Some of the elders wished to prevent him, but Arsalan rose from his seat and said:—"I force no one to go with me. He who is not pleased with my design, may remain in the *aool*, and after my departure talk as he thinks proper. At present I beg you merely to repeat my words in your families, without any observations; but if I learn that any of you dares to sow discord, recollect that Arsalan Sultan has a *keenjal*,† an *arkan*,‡ and a *nagaika*.§ Adieu!" All departed without any further remarks, and Arsalan ordered me to re-

* Better to sink beneath the shock,
Than crumble piece-meal on the rock.

BYRON.

† A dagger.

‡ A halter.

§ A whip.

main. "Well, Ivan, will you go with me, or remain with the women?" "To be sure I will go with you through fire and water," exclaimed I. Arsalan sat down upon the ground, considering; and, after a short silence, said, "Reflect well, Ivan: we are going to almost certain death. In our desperate condition I do not see any other means of deliverance but an attack. We will have to fight with brave and powerful antagonists; they will be probably double our number, and if we do not conquer, we must die. I, being commander, will have to shew an example in my own person, and to conceal the danger in the presence of my people. But with you I wish to be open. I am sorry for you. I give you your liberty. Take my horse and go to your own country. Why should you be a partaker of my bitter lot!" I threw my arms about the good Sultan, and with tears in my eyes replied—"No, Arsalan Sultan, I will not leave you in danger! A Kirgheez does not excel a Russian in magnanimity. You saved my life; you have treated me, not like a slave, but like a son, like a friend: you have taught me the use of fire-arms, and I would be unworthy of my freedom if I were so little-minded as to flee from you, when you are going to meet death. I will go with you, will fight beside you, shield you with my arms, and we shall either fall together, or I will celebrate the victory along with you." Arsalan embraced me, and in tears said—"Be it so!"

Next day, at dawn, a hundred excellent horsemen were in all readiness for action. In addition to them, there were about twenty men with baggage-horses, and

some camels loaded with provisions. To my astonishment I saw no signs of lamentation among the women, and heard no sighing when they took leave of their husbands and lovers. Those who were not able to conceal their grief, did not show their faces. Others, folding their arms, in silence regarded our preparations for advancing. That silent grief and melancholy had a more powerful impression upon the hearts of the warriors than a loud demonstration of sorrow. Arsalan appeared in a rich *shoob*,* mounted on horseback. He turned towards the crowd of women, old men and warriors who remained for the protection of the *aool*, and saying, "Adieu," galloped away into the *steppe*. The horsemen followed him, bidding farewell to their dears in dumb-show. After we had gone such a distance from the *aool*, that we could see nothing but its smoke, we halted to allow the baggage-cattle to get up with us, which we had always to keep within sight. In our first *bivouac* on the *steppe*, we took up a position beside a *koorgan* (cairn); the horses were let loose into the *steppe*, sentinels were posted round, and fires being lighted, we arranged ourselves in a circle upon our felts. Next day, we took the direction of the river Seer-Deryá, and continued to move in a single column, guided by the *koorgans* and the course of the sun, and attesting the correctness of our movements in the night time by the position of the stars. We went a long way without meeting a living soul in the *steppe*; and at last, on the seventh day in the even-

* Fur coat.

ing, we saw a smoke from afar; but the horsemen who were sent forward informed us that it was the *bi-vouac* of a caravan. We halted, and Arsalan resolved in the night-time to reconnoitre and inform himself exactly if this caravan were the same which was the object of our expedition, to fall upon it in the morning and finish the affair. Eight of our best horsemen were detached towards the caravan in three directions.—Four of them made haste and crept in amongst the reeds on the banks of a small lake, at such a distance that they could hear the voices of the guard, and see the faces of the enemy. We in the meantime stood ready for action, and resolved to set out on the first alarm, to rescue our reconnoitrers: but they returned safe, and informed us that it was covered by a numerous body, and that to fall upon it in the night-time would be dangerous, because a sort of fortification was made of the bales of goods, and the guard armed with match-locks kept a sharp look out. We retired some versts to a side, and took up our night's quarters beyond a hill, that our fires might not be seen. Arsalan collected his warriors into a circle, and made the following disposition. Our forces were formed into three divisions. He himself with fifty horsemen was to remain in the centre. One detachment of five-and-twenty men had to make a false attack on the front of the caravan, and another detachment of equal strength on the flank. When this should be executed, then our main body was to fall upon the centre of the caravan, and endeavour to cut out a part of it, and protect their booty by covering it with the horsemen of the

two smaller detachments, who were then to endeavour to unite with the main body, retiring from both flanks of the caravan, and drawing off the enemy's horsemen farther from it. I, with Arsalan's son, Gayuk, was included in the main body. Before day-break, our two small detachments set off, and we remained behind them and extinguished the fires, in order that the smoke might not be seen with the day-light. About mid-day we heard from a distance the tramping of horses and the cries of the camel-drivers. Arsalan, wrapped in a horse-coverlet, climbed up the hill, in order to observe the caravan. When he was out of sight, we mounted our horses, and set off immediately after him. As soon as we heard the reports of fire-arms, we galloped towards the caravan, and on getting up to it, commenced the attack with loud cries. The enemy not choosing to waste their powder upon our two detachments, and seeing their numerical inferiority, fell upon them with pikes, and left the caravan at a distance. We availed ourselves of this opportunity, encountered those who remained behind, beat them, took possession of the greater part of the caravan, drove all the loaded camels into one body, and resolved to defend our booty to the last extremity.—Sultan Alteen observing our success, gave up the pursuit of our small detachments who made a feint as if they would save themselves by flight, and had enticed him farther into the *steppe*. On returning to the caravan, Alteen fell upon us with fury, perceiving in the crowd his personal enemy Arsalan Sultan. Arsalan also could not restrain his rage, and, seizing a lance,

left his own people and threw himself upon Alteen. Rising upon his horse, Arsalan closed upon his antagonist, and was already prepared to give him a blow, but in that very moment a shot was fired. Arsalan's horse fell and knocked his rider under him.

With hellish joy, Alteen leaped from his horse, and unsheathing a Turkish *yataghan*, threw himself upon the prostrate Arsalan, with an intention to cut off his head. I was within a few paces of Arsalan, and on seeing his danger, took a loaded pistol out of my belt, cocked it and fired, and Alteen fell dead beside his enemy, who in the meantime succeeded in extricating himself from under his horse. Arsalan seized upon Alteen's *yataghan*, and with that weapon cut off his head, put it on the end of a pike, and rode towards his people. Alteen's horsemen had scarcely seen their commander's head upon the pike, when their brutal courage sunk into dismay, and they had no more strength than children. They immediately took to flight with doleful lamentations, leaving in our possession the whole caravan, which consisted of a hundred camels loaded with valuable Asiatic merchandise, a numerous flock of sheep, and a number of baggage and provision horses. Besides, we took prisoners ten Bukharian merchants, with fifty drivers and twenty slaves.

Our antagonists had hardly gone out of sight, when we proceeded on our march, directing our way to some friendly *aools* to avoid pursuit. Arsalan had no opportunity to speak with me during the affray; but on the march he took me by the hand, and turning to

his horsemen, said,—“Here is the man to whom I am indebted for my life, and you for your victory and booty! He is now free, but his services are above all reward.” My comrades surrounded me, and overloaded me with thanks and caresses. One of our *ci-devant* poets, of whom there are a number among the Kirgheez, immediately composed a song in my praise. My comrades got it by heart, and sang it in chorus during the time of our march. We went at a very quick rate, and frequently changed our direction, in order to avoid pursuit. In ten days time we returned to our *aool*, exhausted with fatigue after our splendid victory. The whole *aool* came out to meet us, and received us with loud acclamations of joy. Arsalan related my prowess to the whole assembly. The elated Kirgheez took me from off my horse, and carried me in their arms round our encampment, with songs and music, singing impromptu verses and songs in my honour. Three *yoorts* were allotted to me, and I was allowed the privilege of selecting for my wives the first Kirgheezian beauties. I did not avail myself of this particular favour; but I confess I was so well pleased with the honours shewn me, that I thought of remaining altogether among the Kirgheez.

In a few days they began to divide the booty. All the silk stuffs, pearls, and other valuables, were laid aside to be sold in Russia; but the money was to be applied to the common use of the *aool*, except some things which were divided amongst a family, as well as such things as cattle, horses, and camels. Ready-money and the prisoners were divided only amongst

the horsemen who were in the expedition. The Bukharian merchants were allowed the privilege of ransoming themselves. By the general consent, I was allowed four shares of the booty, and granted the privilege of choosing four prisoners for my service. In the number of the prisoners taken by us, who were mostly Persians and Afghauns, there were two Russians. Of course, I took them for my share, in order to grant them their liberty on the first opportunity.

Amidst the cares of our hurried march, I had not an opportunity of attending much to my countrymen; and even had not time to question them particularly about their condition. I learned only that one of them was a gentleman, and the other a disbanded soldier. When they came into my hands, I lodged them in my tent, and the same evening invited them to sup with me, to learn particularly every thing which related to them. One of them was a man of about five and thirty, of a manly appearance, and handsome features. Notwithstanding his long beard and hair, his face seemed familiar to me. The disbanded soldier, a man of five and forty, was easy in his manner, and active. "Who are you, my dear countryman?" enquired I of the first. "I am a gentleman and retired officer." "What is your family name?" "Meloveeden." "Alexander Ivanoveetch Meloveeden," exclaimed I, leaping from my seat and clasping him in my arms. "How do you know me," asked he in amazement. "Do I know you! I am astonished that I did not recognise you at first sight. But you are grown older and altered in your appearance, and you are thinner,

and besides, that beard, those rags ! Alexander Ivano-veetch, look at me. Do you not know your orphan, your Vanky, whom you took with you from Gologordoffsky's house, and left with the Jew at Sloneem ? What a strange fate !" We wept for joy, and embraced one another in silence. The disbanded soldier stood at some paces from us, and wiped off his tears with the back of his hand. At last we grew composed, and, after sending the soldier to the other tent, I remained alone with Meloveeden in order to tell him my adventures.

Meloveeden, after hearing me to an end, was glad that I had been so well brought up, and so situated in the world that I might now be his friend and companion. The same evening we mutually bound ourselves not to separate, but that the one should be partaker of the other's fortune whatever it might be. From that minute we agreed to *thee* and *thou* one another, and call ourselves brethren. As it was already late, we lay down to sleep, and Meloveeden promised me next day to relate his adventures. We rose at break of day, and Meloveeden began his narrative. Here I ought to let my readers know that every thing formerly detailed concerning Gologordoffsky and his family, every thing that was said about love, marriage, and Meloveeden's connection with this family, was drawn by me from this narrative, and thrown back according to its natural arrangement into the first chapters of my auto-biography. It must of course be understood that I was so little and simple while in Gologordoffsky's house, that I was not ca-

pable of understanding all that I have there detailed so particularly. And so I shall here begin with Meloveeden's departure from Sloneem to Moscow with his young wife.

CHAPTER XVI.

Meloveeden's narrative.—A living automaton and his house-keeper.—An old maid's family.—Panorama of Moscow society. A friendly quadrille.—Russian foreigner.—Company at the watering places.—Glance at Venice.

“ON arriving at Moscow with an intention to make my peace with my uncle, and procure assistance from him, I for some days kept out of sight of my acquaintances, and by means of an old friend of my father, endeavoured to come to terms with my former benefactor. But my uncle sternly refused to see me. All the exertions of my friend to bring us together proved unsuccessful. The reason of this unaccountable misunderstanding was this. My uncle who was a cold-blooded man, easy-tempered towards every body, heavy and lazy, was a slave to his habits. He had served thirty years on end in one of the courts of law, where his only employment consisted in writing at the bottom of papers—“Faithfully copied from the original, Stephen Meloveeden.” Almost every evening he spent at the English club-house, where his greatest delight consisted in drinking cranberry lemonade, playing at whist, and hearing scandal, which he, on his return home, repeated to his house-directress, Avdotya Ivanovna. This woman, the widow

of a retired College-registrar,* had hired twenty years before this, lodgings in the same house with my uncle ; and learning at one time that he was dangerously ill, and that there was nobody to attend to him but his servants, took forcible possession of his apartments, with the assistance of the *Kvartalny Nadzeeratl*, (Police-Inspector,) reduced to submission his servants, quarrelled with the sick man and the doctor, and in the meantime did not leave my uncle's bedside—poured medicine down his throat, and plagued him till he grew well. Either from gratitude or pusillanimity, he had not the spirit to expel Avdotya Ivanovna from his lodgings ; and seeing her blustering attachment to himself, and her bustling activity in the management of the house, he left at her disposal every thing which related to domestic affairs. My uncle became soon sensible of the superior excellence of female housewifery, in comparison with the domestic economy of an old bachelor. His linen was all in order, his tea and coffee tasted better, and at the end of every meal, there was always one of his favourite dishes. Habit soon had such a powerful influence over my uncle, that he could do nothing without Avdotya Ivanovna, and every thing which was not made ready by her, or came not through her hands appeared to him disagreeable. The broad, Calmuck, pock-pitted face of Avdotya Ivanovna, could certainly have no charms for my uncle, but it had worn so into his good graces, that he could not help every day staring in her cat's eyes, like a mag-

* The lowest rank in the civil service.

pie in a mirror. His ears were as accustomed to her shrill voice, as those of an old soldier to the beat of the drum : and he would not sleep comfortably if he did not hear her in the course of the day, scolding the servants, neighbours, and pedlars.* The laziness and supineness of my uncle had need of some excitement, and Avdotya Ivanovna had soon such a dominion over him, that he was in her hands a complete automaton, and did not dare even to arrange his night-cap without her advice, patiently heard her abusive harangues, and did every thing with her permission, except subscribing, "faithfully copied from the original." My uncle thought himself fortunate in having found a being, who thought for him, wished for him, feared for him, and hoped for him. He with pleasure committed his property to the disposal of Avdotya Ivanovna, merely to avoid the trouble of having to do with starosts, † stewards, and creditors, who always wheedled something out of him, besides cheating him. He thanked his stars that Avdotya Ivanovna allowed him to visit the English club, on condition however of bringing her all the scandal ; and it was with fear and trembling that he returned home, when, by attending too closely to cards, he lost the thread of any amusing story, and came home newsless. Another in his place would have invented something to quiet the plagny vixen ; but my uncle was so unac-

* All the common articles of food and clothing are hawked about in Russia by pedlars. (*raznóshtcheeks*.)

† Heads of villages, who when the landlord has no steward on the estate, are employed to collect the revenues.

customed to the exercise of his mental faculties, that he would have taken a three days fit of the meagrum, if he had thought three minutes about any thing else than filling his belly, trumps at whist, and his own "faithfully copied from the original."

"Avdotya Ivanovna had a daughter by her husband, the late College Registrar. She was in her third year when her mother took up her abode in the same house with my uncle. After this it was a matter of course that she should be educated at my uncle's expense, and that Avdotya Ivanovna should immediately require her Leeza to speak French, play German airs upon the harpsicord, sing Italian, and dance all manner of foreign dances. Eliza was taught all this for money, but as foreigners do not import wit for sale to us, but merely for home-consumption, Leeza remained a blockhead as God created her.

"My father being a General in actual service, was always with the army. I lost my mother in my infancy, and therefore was brought up till I was ten years of age by a relation of my mother, an old maid, along with a couple of dozens of monkies, parrots, lap-dogs, dwarfs, and all other sorts of rarities. The greatest justice reigned in this menagerie: we were all, that is to say, people and beasts, equally pelted, crammed as much as we could hold, caressed and beaten according to our benefactress's humour. In general her merry fits came on when she heard of the breaking up of any proposed match, no matter who were the parties, or any piece of scandal about married eople. On the other hand, her fits of ill-nature

came on when she heard about marriages, and happy wedlock. Of course the best season for us was in the time of the fasts, when there are no marriages. In her mirthful days, all of us, viz., lap-dogs, monkies, dwarfs, dwarfesses, and myself, were fed upon sweet biscuits and almonds, and in the days of wrath, we were all whipt with one bunch of rods. We were taken in our turns an airing with her in her carriage, one day myself, another day the monkey, and so on. It is not a foolish saying that 'equality of condition unites hearts.' Our man-and-beast society lived in the greatest friendship and concord, except a spiteful Siberian tom-cat,* and an obstinate old monkey, who disturbed the peace of our domestic circle, and for that reason got thumpings from me and the dwarfs, for which we were whipped by our benefactress. I think I would have got upon a friendly footing with the Siberian cat or the monkey, if I had lived longer in that house. But fortunately my father, on his arrival in Moscow, took me from it, having quarrelled with my benefactress, because he had praised before her the connubial state, and had affirmed that he lived happy with my mother. My father spent in the military service a part of his paternal inheritance, but my uncle, while he subscribed, "Faithfully copied from the original," had increased his property tenfold. He undertook to pay for my education, and to maintain me in the service. I was sent to a French boarding-school in course, and on holidays my uncle permitted me to

* The Siberian cat is of a dark-purple colour, and is much prized in Moscow.

come to dinner with him. Avdotya Ivanóvna, to the astonishment of all, not only was not jealous because my uncle divided his benefits between me and her daughter; but, on the contrary, loved me much, caressed me, gave me presents, and behaved towards me as if I was her son.

“On my entering the service after my father’s death, Avdotya Ivanovna, besides obliging my uncle to provide me with every thing which I wanted, made him even give me more than he had intended. At last the secret cause of this kindness came out. Avdotya Ivanovna wanted to marry me to her daughter Leeza; and as soon as I had married another, she made my uncle believe that I had been guilty of the greatest delinquency, shewn myself ungrateful, and at last, by representing me as vicious and ill-principled, got him to disinherit me in legal form. A friend of my father procured me a copy of this ill-fated paper with my uncle’s subscription of “Faithfully copied from the original.” It was the destination of fate; for my uncle would sooner have allowed the sun to be extinguished, than his scribbling to be cancelled, as he always regarded the copy to be more important than the original.

“On hearing of my arrival in Moscow, and my misfortune, some friends of my father united to change my uncle’s resolution. They had recourse to Avdotya Ivanovna, and, by threatening her with Hell and the *Ugolovnaya Paláta*,* succeeded at last in getting

* A criminal court.

Avdotya Ivanovna, before my uncle's face, to agree to give me twenty-five thousand roubles, on condition however that I should make a voluntary renunciation of the whole inheritance, which amounted to a million of roubles.† As I was reduced to extremities, I agreed to every thing, being persuaded that I would make nothing by holding out. The money was told over to me, and I left my uncle in peace, to think with the head and feel with the heart of Avdotya Ivanovna, play at whist, drink cranberry lemonade in the English club, listen to scandal, and subscribe
“Faithfully copied from the original.”

“You were educated in Moscow, my dear Vejeeghen, but you are not acquainted with that ancient metropolis of our nation; besides, you were young and inexperienced. The rascally perverter of youth Vorovaateen, and the rendezvous for antiquated admirers of the fair sex at your aunt's, are two imperceptible points in the Moscow horizon. With regard to the French boarding-school at which you were, these establishments are as like each other through the whole of Russia, as two sheets of white paper. Petersburg may be compared to a pretty young coquette of the great world, seeking gratification with all the attractions and with all the calculations of refinement. Old mother Moscow, on the contrary, is like a decrepit rich widow, who, after having lived in the great world, has retired to a country town in the interior of Russia, which lies in the centre of her property, in order to play the first

† Upwards of £40,000 sterling.

role in her own neighbourhood, without breaking off however her connexions with the metropolis. Moscow, my dear friend, has out of all manner of exotic fancies and rarities, succeeded in weaving for her own shroud a really original article, in which foreigners may distinguish the yarn of their own spinning, but the body of the tissue and the patterns can be claimed by none but our own dearly beloved Moscow.

“The best Moscow society is composed in the first place of *the old men*, as they are called, who have overlived their time, and from ennui or other causes have settled in Moscow for a temporary rest, in expectation of an eternal. This respected rank constitutes a living chronicle for the last half century, or rather living quotations from the contemporary history of Russia. The members of this body form also an Areopagus or supreme court for judging of all contemporary occurrences. They hold their sittings at the English club, and at the houses of respectable elderly ladies of the first three classes. The distinction of ranks is observed by them with as great strictness as in a well drilled regiment under arms. Politics, war, the internal administration of the empire, the appointment to public offices, the decisions of courts of law, and particularly the distribution of ranks and orders, are all subject to the review of this croaking Areopagus. It is this class which gives balls, dinners, suppers, and *soirees*, to persons of distinction passing through Moscow, to public functionaries of the first class, and to the first-rate nobility.

“In the second place—gentlemen in actual service

in the Moscow courts of law, who differ in this only from the public functionaries of Petersburg and other places, that they live more luxuriously, have more inclination for business, and do not take up their time with collateral objects, such as literature and the sciences, as some of our young civilians do in Petersburg.

“In the third place, sinecurists, or mothers’ darlings; that is to say the rear-rank of the phalanx covered by blind fortune. Of these lucky people, the greater part cannot read the Psalter printed in the Slavonic character, although they are all included in the list of Russian antiquaries. They go under the name of ‘*the youth of the Archives*.’ They form our *petites maitres*, fashionables, husbands of all brides, lovers of all women whose nose is not situated on their chin, and who know to pronounce *oui* and *non*. They are the law-givers of the *ton* amongst the Moscow youth, on the promenades, in the theatres and drawing rooms. This rank also furnishes Moscow with philosophers of the last hatch, who are full of every thing to the brim except wholesome thought—*cognoscenti* in rhyming, and desperate judges of rhetoric and the sciences.

“In the fourth place, an immense drove of all sorts of public men retired from the service, belonging to old families who have attained distinguished ranks, in hunting for which they have spent their property; some who, with little trouble, live upon cards and their shifts, and some who merely live from hand to mouth upon Moscow hospitality.

“In the fifth place, provincial landholders who come

to spend the winter in Moscow, to eat up their farm-stock and to have the pleasure of seeing their daughters dance at the assembly of the *noblesse*, or at evening parties, till some bridegroom, attracted by the dowry, (the scent of which talkative aunts know well how to spread,) demands their charming hand, which has known no sort of work from the day of its creation.

“ In the sixth place, gentlemen travellers from Petersburg and the army, in quest of rich brides for which Moscow has been famed from time immemorial. These gentry begin usually at the very top of the ladder, but alight upon *elevees*, or merchants’ daughters, who are surer bargains.

“ These are the chief divisions of our Moscow society, which, notwithstanding their motley nature, constitute a *tout ensemble* like an everlasting masquerade or a Venetian carnival. It would be needless for me to point out to you at present all that is good or bad in this medley. You will see that yourself in time. I may tell you, however, that there are probably no where so many good people, notwithstanding their singularities, as in Moscow.

“ The most prominent feature of Moscow is hospitality, or the propensity for keeping open table. My dear Vejeeghen ! if our planet by any particular misfortune should be subject to a ten year’s scarcity, and supposing provisions were sold for their weight in gold, even then nobody would be starved in Moscow except the *dvoroavey*-servants,* who at other times, amidst

* Household serfs. It would require a separate chapter to de-

the general abundance, are not over well fed, probably that they may be the lighter for work. Although I am no statistical man, I may affirm without hesitation, that more is eaten and drunken in Moscow, during one year, than in the whole of Italy in twice the time. To make their guests eat and drink to excess is esteemed in Moscow the first characteristic of a good *accueil*. To guzzle and swill to a *ne plus ultra* is a sort of pleasure which even well bred people do not deny themselves. But I have entered into too long discussion about our dearly beloved Moscow, and must return to the thread of my story.

“ On receiving the twenty-five thousand roubles, I proceeded with it in exactly the same way as with all the money which ever passed through my hands ; that is to say, I looked only at the beginning of my capital, and would not let my eyes see the other end, for fear I should vex myself at its diminution. I hired a good house, and carriage with four horses, engaged an excellent cook, fixed a particular day in the week for receiving my acquaintances to dine, and spend the evening, and went through the town a visiting. My wife gained in her favour a great party amongst the gentlemen, and I among the ladies. The former found my wife *wonderfully charming*, and the latter called me *amazingly amiable*, and we soon formed acquaintances with the best houses in Moscow, lived like *decent* people, that is to say, we filled others with

scribe the condition of this ill-treated class, many of whom are related to their masters and mistresses by other ties than those of servitude.

meat and drink, and they returned the compliment to us ; we danced when we were asked, dressed, played deep at cards, and consequently contracted debts which we could not pay, &c. &c. &c. !

“Every capital in the hands of a spendthrift has two ends. One end is filled up with pleasures and gratifications, the other, if repentance does not intervene, is characterized by embarrassments which frequently lead to crime. I recollected myself at my last hundred rouble-note, and awoke as it were from a trance at the importunate clamour of my creditors. A ruined man like a troop of horse is always surrounded with a swarm of vermin and bloodsuckers. I was addressed by a number of false gamblers, swindlers, and all sorts of people living on their wits, whose object was to lead me into the snares of iniquity. They proposed to convert my house into a whirlpool of play, expecting that I would be the means of bringing under their clutches people of the higher circles, while my wife being a beauty, would console the losers with tender glances. Others wished to obtain my permission by a consideration of a certain percentage, to make use of my name for dishonest purposes, and the like. I confess I frequently transgressed the rules of strict morality, from thoughtlessness and a propensity for extravagance, but never debased myself by fraud or violating any of the rules of honour. I drove away all my tempters, and resolved — I resolved upon nothing ; only declining to receive company at my house, and pawning my carriage with a coachmaker, I drove about Moscow more than ever, in hopes of stumbling

upon good luck. I begged for time from my creditors, promising to pay them what I was owing whenever my circumstances should mend; and they, seeing they could make nothing of me, consented. Fortunately there was no one amongst them, who, to console himself for the loss of his money, chose to put me into prison, and have the pleasure of boarding me at his own expence.

“Although my ruin made no great noise, there are however no secrets in Moscow, and the news were soon whispered through all the capital. I have already said that there are in Moscow more good or at least condescending people than any where else. They talked, tittered, criticised, abused, and held their peace.—One of the rich elderly ladies who found me *amazingly agreeable*, made me an offer of her friendship and assistance; while her husband, who reckoned my wife *wonderfully charming*, notwithstanding his age and gout, had a very tender heart, and could not endure with indifference that the fair Petronella should be in want of dress. We accepted of their friendly offer, formed one harmonious family, and again lived like singing birds. My wife dressed finer than ever, and I gave more and better entertainments, played high, and after paying my old debts contracted new ones with much more confidence.

“The relations of Count and Countess Tzeetereen were much displeased at our intimate friendship, and, in order to draw the old gentleman and lady away from us, begged the doctors to advise them to go to the mineral waters across the frontier, both together,

and to one celebrated spa, thinking that I and my wife, from attachment, would remain in Moscow. But where passion or necessity interferes, the customs of the world lose their power. The old gentleman and lady agreed to go to the mineral waters from a love of life, but proposed to us to go along with them. We gladly accepted their offer. In order to be freed from the annoying friendship of the old Countess on the road, I feigned myself unwell, and in the meantime, while I groaned and limped at home, I sang and jumped about in other places. In Carlsbad we spent the time pretty agreeably. The company at the waters consisted of faded coquettes looking in the waters for their lost freshness; of gamblers; of ministers, and grandees of different courts retired from place and power, who in the beginning of their disgrace usually resort to the mineral waters as a Lethe to obliterate the remembrance of their former consequence; of young married beauties, who in gratitude to a benefactor seek relief from the pangs of conjugal fidelity, at a distance from their home; of young and old mad-caps in quest of adventures through the wide world; and lastly of a multitude of nervous, consumptive, worn-out, sickly people of both sexes, who according to the fashionable way, esteemed dissipation and pleasure the best regimen for the waters, and consequently all, both sick and sound, tried who would play the fool best, for the benefit of the doctors, innkeepers, gamblers, and nymphs.

“I fell into my element, and wearying of the company of my friends, the Count and Countess, made

up to myself out of doors for what I suffered at home. My wife, with whom I in other respects lived very amicably, sought her own amusements, and between us there was neither jealousy nor discontent. But, my dear Vejeeghen, a thoughtless and disgraceful life sooner or later leads to misery—listen and be convinced !

“ Amongst the fair visitors of Carlsbad, I was most captivated with the Countess Sensibili, who had come from Vienna with her two young children to dispel a hypochondria at the mineral waters. Her husband, an Italian nobleman, held a distinguished post in the Austrian possessions in Italy, and could not accompany her. A certain melancholy was diffused over the charming features of the Countess ; deep sensibility was expressed in her looks, and communicated to the hearts of those on whom she darted her large black eyes. Having seen her occasionally at the house of an old Austrian Baroness, I sought her acquaintance and received permission to visit her. I considered her an Italian, but fancy my astonishment when I learned she was a Russian Princess, although she did not know a word of her mother tongue. Educated in Petersburg by a Frenchwoman, she, in the house of her parents, who were native Russians, never heard it spoken. In that house a preference was alway shewn to foreigners, and the young Princess from her childhood was accustomed to hear that the Russians were barbarians, and unfit for anything except to be peasants and pedlars, and that foreigners were the only people

from whom the Russians should take an example how to live in the world. The Princess was told that the Russian language was only of use amongst the swinish multitude, and that it was so harsh that a well educated lady might catch a sore throat by pronouncing the sharp Russian terminations. The Princess's gouvernante assured her that she suffered a whole week from the toothache and swelled tongue, in consequence of her exertions in pronouncing the word 'Poschtchetheena,' notwithstanding that it is pronounced so easily by the Russian maid-servants. The unfortunate Princess (for I call her unfortunate, as I reckon all those so who do not know and do not love their native country), was extremely glad when her mother on her husband's death left Russia, and after traversing Europe in all directions, settled in Florence. The old lady married there a young French *bourgeois*, for whom she bought the title of Count, where it is a marketable article. In her fifteenth year the Princess Malania was also married to Count Sensibili, and our country-woman soon inured to Italian customs, forgot even the existence of Russia. Ten years after her marriage, she was seized with a hypochondria, arising, it would appear, from a surfeit of the conjugal state; she went to dispel it to Vienna, and from thence to Carlsbad, where I paid her particular attention, and did all I could to convince her that the Russians are capable of loving as tenderly, powerfully, and passionately as the Italians and French, and succeeded in reconciling her to her country. She even began to learn Russian, and found

that the word "*looblyoo*"* was extremely tender and agreeable to the ear.

"The Countess Sensibili was obliged to go and join her husband at Venice. I begged the Countess and Count Tzeetereen to go and winter there. In that city I passed the time very agreeably, visiting every day the dear Countess Sensibili under the *nom de guerre* of a teacher of the Russian language. I did not choose to pass in her house under my own name, for in that case I would have had to introduce Count Sensibili to our family circle, and bring the Countess thither, which might have broken up our friendly quadrille. I was also in the practice of meeting with the Countess Sensibili at the house of an old female friend of hers and at all the public amusements, which, in Venice, are numerous. I shall say a few words about that city.

"The once proud Venice no longer infested with the politics and caprices of its aristocracy, after losing its strength and riches, has not given up its passion for amusements: on the contrary it has become the rallying point of dissipation and pleasure. In Paris and London a man is diverted from the pleasures of sense, by politics and the sciences, which are practically illustrated and form the subjects of common conversation. In Venice, with the exception of music which disposes the mind for receiving tender impressions, other pleasures are not known, but coquetry and love intrigues. Love is the atmosphere of Venice, and foreigners come thither from distant shores and inhale the air of that

* I love.

modern Paphos. Nowhere do the females enjoy so much freedom as in Venice. With a slight covering they issue boldly forth into the coffee-houses and the Casino, and mingle amongst the crowd in the square of St. Mark, in the garden of St. George's Monastery, or on the new Quay. Women are not attended by their husbands but by their *cavalieri serventi*, who perform the same duty to the Venetian ladies as an active adjutant to the young wives of old generals ; that is to say, a serving cavalier must be in constant attendance upon his lady from morning to night, if she does not think proper to take another companion for part of the time. You know that Venice is built on lagoons of the sea and that there canals serve instead of streets, and covered boats or gondolas in place of carriages. These gondolas are floating temples of love, and coffins of conjugal fidelity. The famed jealousy of the Italians vanishes before Hymen's torch, and changes into smoke and vapour, which only forms into hail when a wife's conduct threatens to empty her husband's pocket. In Venice there is no idea of hospitality. There all the inhabitants meet together only in the Casino, in the coffee-houses, squares, or theatre : they treat one another only to ice, chocolate, and very rarely to a dinner, and leave visiting cards at one another's doors.—In general the Italians are not created either for soft converse or for modest domestic life. The greatest happiness of life is with them *far niente*,* and their very pleasures and promenadings they call work. It

* To do nothing.

is unnecessary to tell you that there are no rules without exceptions. I lived in Venice as if I were in paradise for about a year, when one day ——." The voice of Arsalan Sultan was suddenly heard, calling me to him, and Meloveeden's narrative was interrupted in the meantime.

CHAPTER XVII.

The resolution of the Kirgheezeian elders, with reference to my reward.—The continuation of Meloveeden's story.—Duel.—Flight.—The renegade Jew.—Residence in Constantinople.—What is Pera?—Deceit.—Slavery.—Deliverance.

“MY dear Ivan!” said Arsalan Sultan to me, “we have decided your fate in a council of the elders. I know you are melancholy about your country, and, if you remain with us it is only from love to me. Go, in God's name, Ivan! Here is what we have resolved upon with regard to you.” Arsalan took out of his bosom a little scrap of paper, which was wrapped up in several handkerchiefs, as if it were the greatest rarity, and read as follows:—“1. The prisoner of the invincible, free, and famous Kirgheez nation, Ivan Vejeeghen, is set at liberty for his great services to the distinguished tribe of Baganálee Keptchak, and for saving the valuable life of Arsalan Sultan.—2. The free Ivan Vejeeghen is declared a son of the noble and excellent branch of Baganálee Keptchak. If the said Ivan Vejeeghen, looking with the eyes of wisdom, should think of returning to the blessed and best country in the world, the Kirgheezeian *steppe*, in that case every father of a family must receive him into his *yoozt* as if he were his own son, and every Kirgheezeian warrior as his brother, and every Kirgheezeian maid as her

bridegroom or husband, according to the pleasure of the said Ivan Vejeeghen.—3. The whole excellent tribe of *Baganálee Keptchak* is bound to feed and clothe Ivan Vejeeghen and heat his *yoort*, till such time as he shall have grown-up children of his own, or shall himself, of his own accord, give up the privilege granted to him.—4. All the booty belonging to Ivan Vejeeghen as well as his horses and camels, the elders take upon them to sell on the first opportunity either at Orenburg or at some of the Russian fortresses on the frontier, and to remit him the money whithersoever he shall order it. In the meantime they have collected a thousand ducats for his present use, and given him twelve bales of the most valuable merchandise, which shall be delivered to him immediately.—5. Ivan Vejeeghen has a right to take out of the *steppe* with him his Russian slaves, and shall receive a convoy and military escort to the frontiers.”

“Are you satisfied with our award?” said Arsalan. In place of an answer I threw myself about his neck, and burst into tears. At the mere remembrance of my native Russia all my vain glory evaporated like smoke, and I resolved immediately to set off. “When do you think of leaving us?” enquired Arsalan. “Tomorrow,” replied I, holding down my eyes, as if I were ashamed of my ingratitude. “Then I shall make every thing ready for your departure,” said Arsalan, and immediately called to him some of the elders.—Not to interrupt them I went away to my *yoort*.

When I made known to Meloveeden that we were to set off next day for Russia, he could hardly contain

himself for joy ; he wept, laughed, leaped, sang, and at last composed himself, thanked God with tears for his deliverance, and called me his benefactor. "Ve-jeeghen !" said Meloveeden clasping me to his breast, "you have restored me to my country and to freedom ; but this heart will be always devoted to you. I am yours for ever !" The disbanded soldier was no less rejoiced for his deliverance from infidels, and begged me to retain him in my service, seeing that he had neither a hole nor corner of his own in all Russia.

After breakfasting upon mutton roasted on the coals, and drinking *brag*,* I begged Meloveeden to finish his narrative.

"One day," continued Meloveeden, "when I left the house accompanied by my servant, in order to take an airing in a gondola along the shore, a boy gave me a note and hid himself. I supposed that it was a *billet doux*, and made haste to read it. But for once I was disappointed. The note was written in Russian, and these were the contents :—

"If you have but a drop of Russian noble blood remaining in you, and if your honour is not completely tarnished in the career of debauchery, shew your face to-morrow morning at twelve o'clock, on *terra firma* at the Sun Tavern, on the banks of the Brenta with a pair of pistols, without letting any one at home know of this. You will know who I am, on the spot, where one of us must fall."

* A sweetish half-fermented liquor made from rye-malt, of the colour and consistence of porter.

“ Unable to guess from whom this challenge might be, I however resolved to appear at the appointed hour, and immediately went to a friend of mine an Englishman to ask him to be my second. Crossing in my gondola to St. Mark’s Square, I entered a coffee-house under the arcade, hoping to find my friend there, and at the door received another letter in the French language of the following contents :—“ One of us must fall that the other may be happy. To-morrow, at three o’clock in the afternoon, I shall wait you with a sword on *terra firma* at the Swan Tavern on the banks of the Brenta. We are acquaintances, and I have no occasion to subscribe my name, as when we meet, you will know whom you have to do with.”

“ Two duels in one day is no joke ! Notwithstanding that I knew how to handle a sword, and that I was reckoned a pretty good marksman when in the army, I could not help being agitated on receiving of a sudden two challenges. People may think as they please, yet it is any thing but agreeable to be either killed or a killer. I conjectured that it was my gallantry which had brought me into this disagreeable predicament, but could not make out what occasion could arm an unknown fellow-countryman against me. The Englishman not only consented to be my second, but was glad with the thoughts of being a spectator of two deadly encounters. He confessed to me that the national distemper, the spleen, had begun to torment him, and that he had merely on that account undertaken his travels through Europe, in order to meet

with more opportunities of becoming acquainted with death and spurning at life.

"I spent the whole day with the Englishman. He endeavoured to check his spleen, and I to drown my sorrows, in wine : we returned home very late. Next morning I went to the Englishman's with my weapons, and we set off immediately to the place of rendezvous, in order that we might have time to breakfast before death.

"About twelve o'clock in the morning we sallied forth into the main road, expecting to see our antagonist. An Italian of a friendly exterior came up to us, and asked which of us was called Meloveeden. After that, he proposed to us to take a walk in the park where my adversary awaited me.

"At the extremity of a thicket I found my countryman, who was walking backwards and forwards with hasty paces on a small plot of sward. I made up to him, and raising my hat, said : "My good Sir ! I have not the honour of knowing you, and consequently could not intentionally offend you. It seems to me that it would be but reasonable that we should come to some explanation before engaging." "That is not at all necessary," replied my countryman : "the injury done me by you is of such a sort that it is impossible to efface it. You have also no occasion to know my name. It is sufficient to say that I am a Russian nobleman, and an officer, and have come here purposely to fight you. Please to take your station and fire. But recollect that, if you wish to act a magnanimous

part, you will save me the trouble of shooting you, by doing it yourself. The terms of the duel are to be, that our seconds are to measure out fifteen paces, and we on the signal being given, shall be free either to fire at once from our stance, or one of us allowing his adversary to fire, may approach a pace nearer and fire upon the other, presenting the pistol to his head." "That is not duelling, but murdering," exclaimed I. "What! Are you become a poltroon already, you rascal," said my antagonist roughly. "If you attempt to avoid your fate by cowardice, I will immediately blow out your brains." He followed up the word by the deed, and fell upon me like a madman, pistol in hand; and if the Englishman had not succeeded in wresting it from him, he would probably have shot me dead on the spot. My blood boiled within me. "I will shew you my poltroonery," exclaimed I, and immediately took my post. The signal was given, I cocked, drew the trigger, and my adversary fell weltering in his blood before he got time to fire. I flew to his assistance, and to learn his name, and the cause of his hatred towards me. But he screamed out roughly for me to be off, and not pollute by my presence the last minutes of his life. His second, also, did not chuse to answer my questions, and begged us to retire. I returned with the Englishman to the tavern, confounded at this incomprehensible occurrence, and resolved to wait for the other appointment without returning to the city. About the time already fixed, we went to the other tavern where we also found a second. He conducted me into a room,

where, to my greatest astonishment, I found Count Sensibili. "Your lessons in the Russian language," said he, addressing himself to me, "have had such an effect upon my wife, that she has taken a fancy to uplift her share of our property, and along with our children to set off for Russia. I therefore have resolved, Mr. Professor, to give you a lesson of another sort. I might arm against you mercenary assassins, as other husbands are wont to do here; but being in the military service, I follow other rules: so I wish to do myself the pleasure of dispatching you in person, for the injury you have done me—I know all." "I shall not say a word of the injury," said I; "but if you suppose that I have instigated your wife to leave you and set off for Russia, I assure you that you are completely mistaken, and that this is the first time I have heard such a report." "Enough Sir, enough," replied the Count. "Do not set off with a lie your double deceit, with your wife——and - - - but I came not here to explain. Let us go into the garden." There was no alternative, and I was obliged to fight, sword in hand, with the unfortunate husband.

"At first I endeavoured merely to parry my opponent's thrusts or give him a slight wound to put a stop to the fray; but the Count closed so violently upon me, and made such furious attempts to dispatch me, that I grew heated myself, and fell upon my antagonist in good earnest. In desperation he attempted to get hold of my sword, and fastened upon me. But the point of my sword penetrated his breast, and he fell insensible on the ground.

“ With the Englishman's assistance, I carried the wounded man to the tavern, sent for a doctor, and, leaving the Count to the care of his second, hastened into the city. On arriving at home, I met my wife, who gave me to understand that the Count and Countess Tzeetereen had shut themselves up in their rooms and were in the greatest distress ; that the Count had refused to see the charming Petronella, and the Countess had given orders not to admit me into her apartment, and wished us to remove into other lodgings. My wife learned from the valet, that the Count's son, formerly a Captain in a hussar regiment, of whom we knew nothing before this time, had come privately to Venice, was mortally wounded in a duel, and in the agonies of death had written his parents such a letter, that the Countess fainted three times, fell into hysterics and a nervous paroxysm, while the Count experienced a violent attack of the gout and a sort of paralysis. I immediately guessed that my irreconcilable countryman was the Count's son, but concealed my suspicions from my wife. In half an hour I received a letter from the Countess Sensibili, in which she reproached me for the death of the father of her children, called me a monster and a murderer, and forbade me to appear before her eyes. In despair I flew to my friend the Englishman, and there learned that the authorities were in search of the murderers of Count Sensibili and of a foreign traveller, and that, if I should not get across the frontiers before evening, I would be arrested and shut up in prison. I returned home, collected all my ready money and valuables,

wrote a letter to my wife in which I informed her of every thing that had happened, and advised her to return home to her father's and wait me there. After that, I hired a gondola and rowed out to the roads.

"A Genoese vessel was unmooring in order to take advantage of the favourable wind, to sail for Constantinople. The captain whom I had treated the day before in the coffee-house, agreed to take me with him without asking for my passport. At nine o'clock in the evening I was already on the open sea. The tears flowed from my eyes at the thoughts of my unhappy wife whom I had never ceased to love, and whom I, by my own giddiness, and to speak the truth, libertinism, had led into temptation. But now there was no remedy, and though my heart was ready to burst, I resolved to bear my misfortunes with firmness. Repentance barrowed up my soul, and I swore I would reform.

"Amongst the passengers there was a Turk. He spoke French and Italian very well, and perceiving my melancholy, endeavoured to divert me with his conversation. He was about fifty years of age, had travelled much in Europe and Asia, had been in Egypt, and had acquired much experience by reading and observation. He acquainted me that he was a Hamburgh Jew, had studied medicine at Leyden, and in the thirteenth year of his age, being at Constantinople, had resolved to change his persuasion for the Mahomedan, from pure conviction, without any interested motives. Not being accustomed to dispute about religion, I paid no attention to his reasonings upon that

subject ; but observing that he entered upon it more frequently, and sang loudly the praises of Islamism, I declared to him resolutely, that, if he wished to continue on friendly terms with me, he should never speak upon that subject. The renegade complied with my wishes, and confined his panegyrics after this to the Turkish government, to which I listened with patience, merely in order to get some knowledge of the manners and customs of the Turks. Above all, he extolled the honesty of the followers of Mahomet, their adhesiveness to their word, and affirmed that Islamism had cured himself of the natural propensities of the Israelites, who, in his opinion, have never ceased to worship the golden calf, though in a different form.

“ We had a prosperous voyage, and soon arrived at the harbour of Constantinople. I removed to Pera, to an Italian who kept a sort of lodging-house. On unpacking my portmanteau, I almost fainted when I found that my money and valuables were gone. I flew in despair to the master of the vessel, and told him of the robbery. He vouched for the honesty of his crew, but would not answer for the passengers. “ If you had committed the money and things to my keeping, that misfortune would not have happened to you,” said he. “ At present you have only yourself to blame. I am not a rich man myself, and can give you but little assistance. But here are ten ducats for you ; you will repay me when you are able.” With a sore heart I returned to the lodging-house, and on the way met with my acquaintance the renegade, to whom I related my misfortune—“ Mahomet commands us to succour

the needy, not only of our own faith, but all good people," said he. "I reckon you to be so, and offer you board and lodging at my house gratis : otherwise, if you should be in funds at any future time, I shall not refuse to accept of payment. But at present there is no occasion to enlarge upon that. Take your baggage out of the tavern, and I will conduct you to my house." I did not know how to thank the renegade for his generous offer, and immediately availed myself of it. The Porte was then at war with Russia, and therefore we had no ambassador. I told no one that I was a Russian, but called myself a Slavonian from *Bocca di cataro*. In the coffee-houses of Pera, I formed some acquaintances among the christian inhabitants of Constantinople, which contributed to my diversion and even to my subsistence. In the renegade's house I scarcely saw any body, and he rarely spoke to me, being continually occupied with business. I had my victuals brought me into my own little room ; but the bread of charity was not only bitter but very deficient in weight. My daily allowance of *pillav* was not more than a physician would have prescribed to keep me from dying of famishment ; and if I had not got assistance from the Greeks, I would certainly have pined away for want of nourishment.

"How can living in Constantinople please a man of education and sensibility ? The Europeans have hardly any direct intercourse with the Turks, who in their pride and ignorance despise all Christians, and only vouchsafe to receive them into their company, when they anticipate some advantage from their ac-

quaintance. In addition to this, the routine of Turkish life keeps them at a distance from Europeans. The Mahomedan, if not engaged in the service of government, spends the greater part of his life in his harem, and knows no other pleasure than that of smoking his pipe and drinking coffee in a coffee-house, looking at the end of his nose, and listening to the lucubrations of the coffee-house babblers or story-tellers who constitute a class of themselves. The Turks are very sparing of words, and only voluble when they abuse the Franks, that is Europeans, and all Giaours particularly *Rayas* or the Christian subjects of the Porte. Sometimes the Sultan himself gets a share of it, particularly when he undertakes any reform, which is always regarded as an encroachment on Islam. In the coffee-houses, under the very gates of the Seraglio, they abuse the Sultan, who could at a nod cut off their heads, with as great boldness as in Europe our opposition Journals attack the ministry. In other respects, the monotonous life of the Turks and their ignorance can afford the European no pleasure in their company, and, if travellers occasionally seek to form their acquaintance, it is from mere curiosity, to fill their note-books with semifictitious stories.

“ All the business both political and commercial of Constantinople is managed by the Perotes or inhabitants of the suburb called Pera, which forms not only a division of the town, but a separate kingdom, a separate people ! Here live the descendants of Europeans, Italians, (mostly Venetians,) Illyrians, and other southern Slavonians, Catholic Armenians, a small

number of French, and still less English and Germans. The Perotes may pride themselves upon the circumstance of their ancestors being on an equal footing with the first founders of Rome in the time of Romulus, with this difference, that the founders of Rome gained a subsistence by force of arms, and openly robbed on the high-way, while the ancestors of the Perotes attained the same end by less violent means. "The Perotes can claim this distinction before the Romans, that they have not changed the customs of their ancestors.

The carelessness of the Turkish police in looking after Europeans, has brought to Constantinople knights of industry, and bankrupts of all nations, who have taken up their residence in Pera, under the protection of the standard of Mahomet. The language of the Perotes is an Italian made up of all the dialects of Italy, with a mixture of Turkish, Greek, and Slavonian words pronounced in a peculiar way. Their ignorance of every thing regarding the arts and sciences is on a parallel with that of the Turks; but their finesse makes up for all their deficiencies, and a knowledge of languages constitutes all their wisdom. The children, while they are hardly able to lisp, are taught to speak Turkish, Greek, French, and Italian. This is the means of conducting the Perotes to riches and honours, putting into their hands all the diplomatic affairs of the Porte; for it is from them that the Dragomans or Tolmatches are selected for the European missions. It may be easily conjectured with what fidelity they serve the Europeans, when it is plain as day-light that a Perote knows nothing in the world more excellent

than his own dirty Pera, nothing more majestic than a Turk, nothing wiser or mightier than the Sultan, and nothing worse than all nations and all people who do not profess the Roman Catholic faith, or have not the honour of being Mussulmen. The ambition of a Perote does not go farther than the place of Dragoman, and the only object of his life is the accumulation of money. They also take up the calling of trading-consuls and brokers, and after growing rich by the help of commerce and roguery, set up for bankers. The Perotes hate the Greeks, and do them all the harm they can when they have it in their power, being afraid lest they should take the trade out of their hands. The Greeks hate the Roman Catholics, merely because they are of the same persuasion as the Perotes. Among the Greeks, to call any one a Perote is synonymous with the term Jesuit among us. The European travellers and official people belonging to the different embassies, have more intercourse with the Perotes owing to the similarity of their mode of living to the European, and to the facility of communication without the use of the Eastern languages. The women act a leading part in the Perote community. Their whole occupation consists in sitting, during summer, the whole day on a sofa, and in winter at a *tandoor*. This *tandoor* is a sort of low square table, covered with a wadded quilt, and on the top with green cloth. Under the table there is a brazier with burning charcoal, which gives heat to the honourable company who are seated on small sofas around the *tandoor*, hiding their feet under the table, and covering themselves up

to the waist with the coverlet. There are no stoves or chimneys, as you may be aware, in Constantinople. At these *tandoors*, they play cards, talk scandal, praise the Sultan when he cuts off the heads and confiscates the property of his subjects who have not the honour to be Perotes, and carry on love intrigues by handing *billets doux* under the coverlets. The Perote females are distinguished for their propensity to love-adventures, and most of them assist their husbands, brothers, and fathers in their struggles for preferment and wealth, and in the discovery of political secrets. Owing to the want of a polished European community, the foreign envoys invite the Perote ladies to their balls and routes, and these ladies constitute the great world of Constantinople, in proportion to their means and connections.

“ A Greek acquaintance introduced me among the Perotes ; but as I had no money, and did not wish to try more experiments in love, I met with but a dry reception. I had myself but little pleasure in a society where I found no food either for the mind or the heart. Among the Greeks I found more sincerity, more intellect, and more politeness, than among the Perotes. The Grecian females are almost all beauties, while, on the contrary, among the Perotes beauty is very rare. The wives and daughters of the Greek Boyars or descendants of the ancient Greek families, are distinguished for their personal and mental charms ; but they do not appear in European society, as the Perotes do all they can to keep them out of the way. The Armenians, being entirely occupied in trade and the exchange and transfer of money, live according to their

own fashions. The Jews, as they are everywhere, are rag-dealers, barbers, retail shopkeepers, errand-runners, and rogues, except some rich jewellers who are distinguished for cheating in the wholesale way.—The Turkish police keeps a sharp look out upon every thing relating to trade and civil order, as far as they contribute to the peace and exigencies of a Mussulman's life. To the affairs and proceedings of the Franks it does not pay the smallest attention, till a complaint be lodged for roguery or murder ; but even then it allows the guilty to buy themselves off. Owing to this, there is not in the whole world such a rendezvous for rogues as at Constantinople. It is their mother-country, and more astonishing than all that, with the exception of the officers of the European embassies and casual travellers, the honestest people in Constantinople are the infidels, that is to say, the Turks.

“ I spent four months in Constantinople very miserably, not knowing what to resolve upon, when, on a sudden, it was reported that the plague had appeared in some quarters of the town. Knowing that it is a difficult matter for a poor man, and especially a Christian to take precautions against infection, and not wishing to be its victim, I intended to leave Constantinople for the islands of the Archipelago or for Russia. A friend of mine assured me that I, being a son of the eastern church, would be received with open arms in the islands which follow the Greek persuasion, but dissuaded me from seeking an asylum among the Roman Catholic Greeks. I mentioned this intention to my landlord ; but he opposed it strongly. “ You do not

know the Greeks," said he to me. "Self interest is their only God, which they continually worship, and bickerings and disagreements are their only occupation. Without money you will be received like a beggar, though gifted with all the talents in the world. Listen to me—I have been long thinking of your condition, and have at last succeeded in finding a situation for you. There is a Persian merchant here, one of the richest capitalists in the East. He wants an European clerk for his trade. Throw aside your nobility for a season, and serve with a merchant. In five or six years, you will have become a *millionaire* yourself: return to your native country, throw your mantle of *noblesse* again about your shoulders, and live after the manner of your caste, pouring emptiness into vacuity." After thinking a little, I agreed to the renegade's proposal, and next day we arranged to go to the Persian.

"The Persian spoke a little Russian, and had been on some occasions in Moscow and Petersburg. "I want a man who knows the French and Italian languages," said the Persian; "but so much the better that in addition to that, you understand the Russian. Make ready to-morrow for setting off with my caravan. If you behave yourself well, you will have a good life of it with me." I wished to know upon what terms the merchant was to receive me into his service; but the renegade dissuaded me by the insinuation that I would spoil all the business by an appearance of selfishness. "In all countries not civilized like Europeans," added he in French, "the merchants do not pay a fixed yearly salary to their clerks, but give them a share of the

profit. You should not shew yourself avaricious; on the contrary, you should rejoice only in your employer's advantages, as if you did not think of your own. Then the merchant will give you a share, and you will become his partner. But till such time as he knows you and loves you, you should go to work assiduously, as is the way in the east between masters and servants. Resolve, my dear friend, to put up with some little temporary disgusts, in order to insure your happiness for the remainder of your days. You told me yourself, that you had no means of subsistence in your own country, and that, besides, you had no hope of ever attaining riches there. It does not answer to live for ever at another man's expence, and it is best of all to be indebted only to yourself for your income." The words of the renegade, "It does not answer to live at another man's expence," made me decide, whatever it should cost. The same evening I removed to the Persian's quarters at a *caravanserai*, and next day we set off. I shall not describe to you either the towns or the countries through which we passed, nor the customs of the various Asiatic tribes whom I saw on my journey: that would take up too much time. I may describe all that I saw in a few words—ignorance, roughness, rudeness of manners, constitute the leading qualities of those nations, with the only difference, that in the Asiatic towns where trade flourishes, effeminacy and pusillanimity occupy the place of love to acquaintance, and the arts and refinements of luxury, and that the nomade tribes of Asia, on the contrary, are distinguished for their wild bravery and open robbe-

ry. My dear friend, among Europeans there are people who exclaim against civilization ! let them look at Asia-Minor, and compare its present state with what it was under the rule of the wise caliphs, the lovers and protectors of civilization. Ignorance degrades humanity to the condition of an irrational animal, and the most ravenous creatures on the face of the earth are a half civilized people, who, having advanced only one step beyond savages, have learned only one letter in the great book of civilization, and take words for things, and things for words. It is only selfish culprits who can wish for ignorance, in order to take advantage of the obscurity, to get rid of their vamped-up wares and base money. But, my dear friend, I cannot give you a better illustration of the advantage of civilization, than the following anecdote which has been impressed on my memory since my childhood.

“ For what end do you set a-going academies and schools, and disseminate the sciences ?” said the Vizier Moozafer to the Caliph Haroun al Raschid. “ Don’t you think that the people, once they are instructed, will more easily get the better of you ?” “ Certainly ;” replied the Caliph, “ the instructed people will be better able to judge of the justice of my laws and the purity of my intentions.” “ But will they pay the taxes better ?” “ Certainly ; they will find more means in their enlightened state to attain riches, and will, besides, comprehend that I do not ask more than what is absolutely necessary.” “ Will they fight your wars better ?” “ Much better, when they comprehend that the happiness of every family depends upon the

welfare and glory of their country ; and, besides, they will fight more successfully under the guidance of able commanders." " But will not your wise men, your philosophers, think of meddling in the affairs of government ? Will they not venture to notice the errors of your administration ?" " Let them seek for them, find them, and tell me of them ; I will be more upon my guard in the future, and govern them all the better." " How, would you, oh light of the world ! allow your wise-acres to speak boldly every thing which might come into their head ?" " If I did not, they could not enlighten us." " But cannot the wisest man fall into mistakes ; may they not set up error for truth ?" " One will fall into a mistake, and the other will perceive it and correct it." " My Lord ! I must at last warn you of the consequences of all this ; as soon as your people are instructed, some daring spirits will venture to criticize the proceedings of your favourites, of those who enjoy your confidence, and withal of me, even of *me myself* !" " I understand you," said the Caliph, and left the room. This allegory I would have written up in letters of gold on some public monument, for the conviction of bigots and rogues who wish for the increase of ignorance, in order that they may catch fish in muddy water. It were to be wished that all legislators had before their eyes the example of Haroun al Raschid, who, by spreading education among the rude people of Asia, gained strength, riches, and glory. Civilization departed from Asia, and the empire departed from the Caliphs !

" A number of merchants and travellers united them-

selves with us in order that they might proceed with greater safety ; for, in the countries of ignorance, there is no possibility of travelling without an escort of armed men. We hired a guard from town to town. My employer appointed me to superintend the caravan, and behaved towards me very civilly, and quite on a footing of equality. But as soon as we arrived within the Persian dominions, he informed me that I was his slave, and that he had bought me from the renegade Jew. It was to no purpose that I told him, the renegade had no right to sell me, because I was never taken prisoner, but came to Constantinople of my own accord, as a traveller, under the protection of the laws and rights of nations. The Persian explained to me, that there was now war between the Turks and Russians ; that the renegade knew that I was a Russian, consequently it was lawful for every Turk to take a Russian captive wherever it might be ; and besides that, I was owing the renegade for board and lodging, more than I would be able to discharge all my life. “ You made no bargain with the renegade,” added the Persian ; “ consequently he was at liberty to demand as much as he pleased from you, though it should be a thousand sequins !” To persuade me fully of my slavery, the Persian shewed me a paper which he called the deed of purchase, witnessed by a Cadi in Constantinople. I was obliged to be silent and take the blame to myself ! After passing through the famous Persian cities of Tabreez and Teheran, we arrived at last at the town of Astrabad, where my master had his regular residence, and carried on an extensive trade with Bukharia, Khee-

va, and Russia. He had no occasion for my assistance in business, but appointed me to instruct his son, a boy of twelve years of age, in languages; letting me know at the sametime, that any attempt of mine to escape from my servitude, would be punished with death, while submission without murmuring would be rewarded by good entertainment and civil usage. In reality, I was treated in his house with sufficient humanity, as our country gentlemen who have good tempers behave to their sons' governors or the parish schoolmasters.* One day I was in my master's apartment, when a merchant came to him to buy some articles of gallantry. My master spread out upon the table a number of precious stones, ear-rings and necklaces of European workmanship, and I was quite astonished when I saw among them those very things which had been stolen from me on board the ship.—When the merchant, after having cheapened and examined the things, left the room, I said to the Persian, “Master! among those valuables I see the things which belonged to me. I cannot suspect you of any dishonesty, seeing you were not on board the vessel in which my property was stolen from me. But tell me, if you please, in what way you procured these things?” “I bought them at Constantinople of your old landlord, the renegade Jew,” replied the Persian. “And this is the honesty which the Jew has learned in the Ma-

* The deacon of every parish is the schoolmaster *ex officio* in the Russian Church, and poor people can attain, at his school, a knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, for a very moderate fee.

homedan faith," exclaimed I involuntarily. "Friend!" replied the Persian, "the faith was not to blame, but the man. Take this advice from me. Be on your guard always against a home-bred wolf, and a man whose religious conversion has risen from low motives of self-interest."

"I was more than three years in slavery, and at last resolved to flee, notwithstanding the threats of capital punishment. I formed an acquaintance with a Bukharian merchant, and promised him a high ransom if he would take me to Russia. Fortunately the Bukharian had been in Moscow, and knew my uncle, having sold him some shawls for his housekeeper.—The Bukharian took me with him from Astrabad, and united with the caravan which was on its way to Russia, through the Kirgheezian *steppe*. The remainder you know. I am indebted to you for my freedom. On my return to Moscow I am determined to seek for my wife, and to rid myself completely of two unfortunate weaknesses—raking and extravagance—to return to the service, and gain by my labours, though a poor, yet an honest livelihood." "Amen!" said I; I commend your resolution, and in the meantime we must make ready for our journey."

CHAPTER XVIII.

I quit the Steppe—Another provincial magistrate—Custom-house officers—A lawyer's dinner.

I shall not describe how we took leave of Arsalan Sultan, his family, and the whole *aool*. I shall merely say that from the oblong grey eyes of the Kirgheeze tears dropped much more sincere than those tears which are set off by our mourning-apparel, with *weepers*;* and although neither the farewell of Abelard and Eloisa, nor of Hector and Andromache, nor the friendly expressions of Orestes and Pylades have been translated into the Kirgheeze language, yet the simple expression of adieu by the worthy Arsalan and my companions his horsemen, moved me to the quick. To speak the truth, the Kirgheeze beauties were not a little displeased with me for resolving to leave the *steppe* which was adorned with their charms; but at the last moment, all was forgotten. The old men consoled the rest by repeating, "He will return back to us: you will see that he will return. It is impossible that such a fine youth should like any other place better than the Kirgheeze steppe."

I with Meloveeden went foremost. The old soldier, Niketas Petroff, whom I took into my service,

* Narrow facings of white cambric, attached to the black coats of mourners.

led three camels with our baggage. Thirty light horsemen formed our escort, and followed us at a short distance. The weather was warm, and our ride was very pleasant.

A man of the world with a good heart and sound mind, only knows his real value at a distance from society. Trifling cares, connections, acquaintances, and temptations, withdraw his mind from important objects; and it is only the stroke of misfortune or solitude, which tears away the sorcerous blind from his eyes. "I now feel in full measure the nothingness of all that I formerly reckoned blessings," said Melveeden one day to me; "and thank Providence that he has rescued me from the snares of vice by means of misfortunes which I deserved for my giddiness, or, properly speaking, bad behaviour. Here am I, a solitary man on the face of the earth, without wife, without relations, without friends, without any thing to subsist upon; and, besides, I have no right to excite pity by my condition, and console myself by the remembrance of my innocence. Bitter fate! what might I now have been, if I had continued in the service, employed my talents for the public benefit, and endeavoured to gain the attention and respect of reputable people, true sons of their father-land? I sought in life nothing but pleasure and dissipation, never troubling myself about the future, and not caring about the present. What have I got by those foolish acquaintances, connections founded on profligacy! Emptiness of heart, and repentance of soul. I ruined my wife, whose only fault was thoughtlessness. I might

have made of her a good and happy companion, the ornament of her sex. My dear friend! Let my example serve you for a lesson. In my youth I had no guide to be depended upon: this was the cause of all my misfortunes! My lively imagination and hot temper, were allowed full reins. No one thought of giving me any rules for my guidance through the journey of life. In my youth I regarded as synonymous, morality and ennui. Vejeeghen, you are at present in exactly such a predicament as I was at your years. You have also been taught every thing except that which is indispensably necessary for you to know. Beware of people who seek your friendship merely for the sake of pursuing pleasure in company. Never obey first emotions, and consider the means well before you set about the attainment of your ends. You are a handsome lad! Take care of the women. - - But you are yawning, Vejeeghen! I see that moral philosophy will act upon you more by example than by precept." And in reality, not being accustomed to hear lectures on morality, I could hardly keep from sleeping on my saddle, when Meloveeden gave vent to his feelings from the bottom of his soul. "My dear friend," added he, "whether you will or not, I must be your guide in the world. If not my past morality, at least my past experience and present wish to reform, as well as my affection for you, give me a title to it." I gave him my hand, and he clasping it in his own, said: "For ever."

Within an hour's march of the first Russian outpost, we took leave of our Kirgheezeian escort. When

we saw the Russian sentinel, our hearts beat quicker, and we sent up our prayers in tears, with blessings on our dear country. One must be absent from it to feel the pleasure of returning to the land of his nativity. The first minute after crossing the frontiers is quite enchanting. The future presents itself in its most attractive form ; all its shadings disappear from the picture, and every man who speaks his mother-tongue is hailed as a friend, as a brother !

The commander of the forepost, a Cossack officer, received us very civilly, but at the sametime signified to us, that, as we had no passports, and were returning to Russia with things not yet used, he must present us in the first place to the local authorities, where we would receive tickets of residence ; in the second place to the custom-house, where our goods would be examined, the duty paid, and stamps affixed. Next day we set off thither, escorted by an orderly and six Cossacks.

On arriving at the district-town we waited upon the Sheriff. Michael Ivanoveetch Shtweekoff had been Major in an infantry regiment, had retired on account of his wounds, and accepted of the appointment of *Capitan Eespravnik* of his native place, at the request of the landholders. He was a man of about forty years of age, and had rather an air of moroseness and importance about him. It was also observable, that, from his habits of command and subordination, he expected submission from those whom he reckoned his inferiors. When we waited upon him, he hardly rose from his chair, and in return to our bows only nodded

his head. Then he took the paper from the orderly, and as soon as he read in it, that Meloveeden was a retired lieutenant, and I a minor of a noble family, he rose a second time, made a respectful bow, although very drily, and, as it is called, from on high; then he sat down, and pointing to a row of chairs beside the opposite wall, said with a drawling voice: "We beg you will please to be seated." In the meantime his clerk appeared, who, stretching himself like a fiddle-string, and with his arm bent like a tailor, waited the word of command. "Gentlemen," said Shtweekoff, "there have been cases of Russian vagrants, and even criminals concealing themselves in the Kirgheezean *steppes*, returning from thence under other names, and even calling themselves people of rank. To put a stop to this mischief, the orders at present are, not to give passports to Russian travellers till we have proofs of their statements being correct. And so you must excuse me if I detain you in our town till answers come from Moscow, and the government-town, to my papers, which I shall send off by this post. I know that if I should wait till I received a decision from a court of law, before I gave you your passports, your hairs would grow grey with grief and old age; but I permit myself some liberties for the common good. I have written to the governor direct with my own hand, and to Moscow to a friend of mine. If I am convinced of the veracity of your statements, I will storm all forms. I now beg one of you will retire to the other room, till we take the other's verbal statement." An attendant conducted me into another room through the

passage, and from ennui I employed myself in examining the pictures which hung on the walls in wooden frames, stained with black oil paint. Above all, my attention was attracted to an inscription under a glass, written on parchment in letters, composed of human figures in various positions, heels uppermost, on their knees, crawling, &c. The inscription was to this effect: "Such is the world now-a-days!" Farther on hung some copperplates painted with the finger, and engraved with a nail; *the four seasons of the year; the four quarters of the globe; the adventures of Genevieve of Brabant*; and in the most honourable place, above a large elbow-chair, the portrait of Peter the Great. In a small cupboard with a glass door, there stood some dozens of books, amongst which I observed, *The Bible and New Testament; the Ball of Russian History, by Kheelkoff; Tatischeff's Russian History; the Law Memorandum Book; the Works of Lomonosoff; and the Address-calendar*. In a quarter of an hour I was called into the Eespravnik's sitting room, and had to give answers to the questions put. I merely mentioned that I had quitted my aunt in Moscow in company with Vorovaateen for Orenburg; that I was taken ill in that town, and on coming to my senses, found myself a prisoner among the Kirgheez, not knowing how. I did not wish to state my conjectures concerning Vorovaateen and Nojoff, and that Arsalan Sultan had saved me from the hands of monsters who wished to take away my life. That would have carried me too far, and might have involved me in a criminal suit. Meloveeden advised

me to keep silent about it, till we should make some further discoveries, or should meet with Voravaateen. When the examination was finished, the sheriff required me to give up into his custody all my money, and signified that he would seek out for us reasonable and comfortable lodgings, where they would give us credit. "Your money I shall return you," added he, "when ever I get answers from Moscow and the Governor!" At these words Meloveeden could not contain his indignation, but exclaimed: "How do you dare to plunder us?" "To plunder," repeated the Eespravnik, growing red with chagrin. "Sir, I have taken a town by storm, I have ruled provinces, but never plundered. You may thank your stars that your situation and my office do not allow us to settle the affair in another way. I act according to law; do you understand me, *according to law!* you are passportless individuals. I do not know who you are, and my reason for not leaving money in your hands is, to prevent you from over-leaping all the precautions which I have taken on your account. If I left it with you, it would be all the same as if I left with Turkish prisoners the keys of my powder-magazine. Please to depart to your lodgings!" Recollecting Sava Saveetch, and thinking all Eespravniks were birds of a feather, I said to him: "I say Mr. Major, let us settle the business amicably; take for yourself a couple of hundred ducats, and let us off to day for Moscow without further trouble." The *Eespravnik's* face again glowed like a coal; he darted his large eyes in my face and held his peace. "If that is too little," added I, "take another hundred, and free

us from farther claims." At this the *Eespravnik* heaved a groan, blustered forth two or three dozen abusive expressions, which, however, had no direct reference to any one, and which were repeated by us unconsciously in a sort of whisper, and exclaimed in a fury; "Young man! hold your tongue, or I shall not be able to contain myself! How do you dare to offer me money? You have certainly spent your youth among rogues or" — — He could not finish his speech for passion. I answered coolly; "Excuse me, I have known sheriffs, judges, and even procureurs." "Devil take them and you," exclaimed the *Eespravnik*; "deliver up your money, and be off with you." Here was no alternative, and I gave up my bagful of ducats. The *Eespravnik* counted over the money in silence, gave me an acknowledgment that he had received it into his custody, and ordered an invalid to conduct us to our lodgings, saying that that attendant would remain with us for a guard of honour. When we got into the street, Meloveeden said, "What do you think now, brother; we have fallen out of the frying pan into the fire! This *Eespravnik* has no more ceremony about him than the Kirgheezian troopers. We shall see our ducats as soon as we see our ears, I am afraid! Gold melts like butter when it passes through the hands of these law-mongers. What a cursed *Capitan Eespravnik*?" "Do not get into a passion, my dear friend, and do not judge too hastily, replied I; "it is true that this *Capitan Eespravnik* is as rough as a wild horse; but you perceived what a passion he got into when we suspected him of bribery."

"That is all a fetch," returned Meloveeden; "it is long since I gave up trusting in the integrity of people in office, and I am ready to pledge you any thing that we shall never see more of our ducats. You will not knock money out of that fellow's pocket with a cannon shot: why should he have been content with a part, when he had the whole in his power? You surely know the mathematical axiom that a part cannot be equal to the whole." "But the receipt?" "What is that scrap of paper worth, when even a regular stamp in the hands of a lawyer turns into tinder as if it were on the coals. They will pluck you so, that you will be glad to leave them all your property in their hands for the sake of preserving your body and soul." "We shall see!" "We shall see!"

There were two clean rooms hired for us in the house of a merchant who traded in wine, sugar, tea, and groceries. We found waiting us the gentlemen of the custom-house, who were circumambulating our bales of goods as a fox does a hen-house; but our old soldier, like a real mastiff, was guarding our property, seated on a bale, and squinting about on every side. We had hardly entered the room, when the custom-house officers came up to us, one of them with leaden stamps, a hammer, and strings, another with writing paper, and a third with a large book under his arm. "Excuse us, gentlemen, for disturbing you," said one of them, with a gentleman-like air; "But we shall soon finish the business," returned the second. "And we shall arrange it as is most agreeable to yourselves, relying upon your word," added the third. "Our duty

is encumbered with many unpleasantnesses," said the first; "but between men of honour and breeding, there are ways and means to soften and shorten the tedious and disagreeable part of the business; particularly in the present case, we must be indulgent; you are not merchants, and do not know that you must give a declaration, make out a list of the merchandize, put down the value, and write and subscribe a great variety of different papers!" "I will take all that upon myself," said the second, rolling up the paper and making a respectful bow. "Then the stamping and valuation," added the first: "That is my affair," said the third, "making a bow. And, lastly, the payment of the duties. I shall take upon myself," said the first, raising his voice and looking knowingly at the two others.—"Gentlemen," said I, "follow the proper course. We understand nothing of this business, but seeing your civility, hope that you will not injure us." "Injure you! God forbid!" exclaimed all the three together; "Allow us now to proceed with the business," said the first, "and I beg you to be present, seeing that we have no underhand work, and do not wish to raise suspicions on honourable people."

We went all together into the court-yard where the bales were lying; some of their attendants fell to work to unpack them, and I, not knowing what was in them, was very glad when I saw a whole heap of silk-stuffs, Bukharian shawls, and a bale of Cashmere shawls of excellent quality. I observed that the colour went into the cheeks of the custom-house officers at the sight of these goods. The first of them took me and Meloveeden

by the arm, led us aside and said, "The duties on these goods will be very high, almost the half of the whole value. But we shall arrange all that so that the wolf may be filled and the sheep remain entire. However, to fix the value, allow us to take home with us some odd pieces of all these goods; for if we value them in the presence of others, you understand, we cannot do any thing for your advantage." I looked at Meloveeden—he smiled and shrugged his shoulders. "Do what you please, only have done with it as soon as possible," said I. The officer made a respectful bow, and turning to the bales, whispered a few words to his companions, and began to lay some of the goods to one side. In the meantime, the other wrote, and the third affixed the stamps: the affair went on flamingly. At last the light began to leave us, and the gentlemen of the custom-house went away, leaving their own sentinels beside the goods. When it was completely dark, a carter came in at the back-gate, put into his cart the goods that had been laid aside, and went away with them for valuation. Next day by dawn, one of the officers made his appearance with a multitude of papers to which I had to affix my name. At last he presented the valuation of the goods and the account of the duties which I had to pay. I wrote a note to the *Eespravnik* begging him to satisfy the custom-house; which he immediately did, locked up all the goods in a warehouse and put his seal to it, saying, "Your goods are subject to the same lot as your ducats. You will have a right to dispose of them as soon as I receive an answer."

When all these operations were performed, our landlord, a respectable old man with a white beard, came into our room and intimated to us, that if we wanted anything we should apply to him. I begged him to go to the gentlemen of the custom-house, and request them to deliver us back the goods which they had taken home to value. ‘What falls among dung, you will never find again!’* added the old man smiling. “Notwithstanding all that, they charged you double the regular duty. These gentlemen forgot neither themselves nor the exchequer.” “That may be called the knowledge how to unite the useful with the agreeable!” said Meloveeden. I would have got into a passion and lodged a complaint against them, but the merchant quieted me and restrained me from any such attempts, by representing that it would be all to no purpose, as I had signed the quittances. “We must submit patiently to circumstances which we cannot avoid, worthy sirs!” said the merchant. “For instance, if the doors of the house are low, all that would enter, must stoop to avoid knocking their heads. If one spar on a bridge is higher than the rest, every carriage must be jolted on crossing it. Exactly so in some affairs of common life, there are continual abuses which arise from the facility of committing them: neither time, nor laws, nor force, can altogether eradicate them. Even in the days of the apostles, the occupation of revenue-officers was notorious for procuring them riches with the imprecations of the multitude.—

* A Russian proverb.

Up to this time the collectors of taxes in all countries of the world maintain the splendour of their ancient name, and like worthy descendants, do not fall behind the fame of their predecessors. You have to day, gentlemen, had experience of that truth yourselves; while I experience it my whole life. Besides, gentlemen, you should not judge of the whole by a part. Every thing has its right side and its wrong, and among the revenue officers of the present day, you will find people who are worthy of every respect. But unfortunately such is the way of the world, that wherever there are most opportunities to transgress, there will be most transgression. A blacksmith cannot easily avoid burning his fingers, nor a fisher avoid wetting himself. You understand me, gentlemen!"

Our first exertions were directed to dress ourselves in the European fashion; for we had no other apparel but the Kirgheezian. Having money, I wished to get a suit of fashionable clothes. Till the landlord procured cloth for us, we spent some days within doors, looking out from the windows at the passers by. The house was in a square where there was also a German tavern. This was the place of resort for the magistrates and gentry who were in town upon business or idleness. We wished to find out the fashions, but we could make neither head nor tail of them: in a *district town*, 'every man to his mind,' in the full sense of that proverb. Young people wore immense whiskers and mustachios bedizened with tobacco-smoke and Spanish brown. The bristly head was covered with a *chapeau de voyage*, or foraging-cap. The *vengerka*,

that is to say surtout, adorned with strings in the husar fashion, or Cossacktchekmen, long velveteen or nankeen trowsers, and a black stock, composed the dress of the *district-dandy*. Coats were reserved for important occasions, balls, marriages, and formal dinner-parties. Every country gentleman was in the habit of providing himself with a suit of clothes in the capital, when he happened to be there upon any business, such as borrowing money from the *Opekoonsky Sovyet*,* or of ordering clothes through his friends in the government-town. Owing to this there was no prevailing fashion in this *district-town*, and it was impossible to learn which of the old fashions was the latest. Besides this, fashionable coats and waistcoats were very frequently transferred from hand to hand by way of barter, by the help of fifty-two painted pieces of pasteboard, and owing to that a man's clothes did not always fit him. In a word, we were so unfortunate as not to be able in the course of six days to see one man dressed according to fashion; while the three chief tailors of the place, whom we invited to take a part in our consultations, differed essentially in their opinions. At last the bailiff of a grandee, just arrived from Moscow, relieved us from our perplexity. We, taking him for a model, got our clothes made, equipped ourselves as it might happen, and began to sally forth out of the house.

The principal personages in the town were the

* The bank connected with the Foundling Hospital, which lends money upon pledge of serfs and immoveable property.

Mayor, (Gorodneetchy) the lawyer of the district, and the treasurer and members of the district-court : the last mentioned persons, however, had no strong ties on the community, as they lived on their estates, and came to town only during the terms of the court's sitting. Their representative was the secretary, who, in his own person, united all the importance of a court of law in its juridical and political capacity. The *Capitan Eespravnik*, although he enjoyed great consideration through the district, had not so much power in the city as the mayor, and was therefore neither the first nor the second person there, but equal with the *Gorodneetchy*—consequently his actual rival. In this small circle, the great world, (with all its intrigues, caprices, and singularities,) was reflected, “ *like the sun in a little drop of water !*”

At the end of a fortnight, the *Capitan Eespravnik* being satisfied with our modest demeanour, quenched his wrath, and moved his sister, the lawyer's wife, to invite us to her name's-day feast. We went to dinner, and found already assembled a numerous society. The married ladies arrayed in blond caps, rich dresses, cashmere shawls, adorned with pearls and brilliants, sat by themselves, talking loudly all the time. The young ladies formed a separate knot, and whispered to each other, with downcast eyes. The lady of the house did not remain among her guests, but ran about the rooms sweating and bustling. Her blond cap was blackened a little with the kitchen smoke, and her curls were loosened by the heat. As soon as any fresh guest came into the room, the landlady's little daughter immediately ran

to tell her, and she flew into the room in a flurry, with her face as red as a coal; then, after paying her compliments to her guest and shewing him a seat, she again hastened to the cares of her household. The other guests examined with an eager gaze every new-comer from top to toe, and appeared to dissect the stranger's dress with their eyes. The gentlemen, who were mostly people in official situations, were all in uniform: they strutted up and down the rooms, and stopped frequently at a little table, on which stood spirits and whets. All knew our adventures, and as I had money and merchandize, they all behaved civilly to us, only with a patronising air; for they did not know yet whether I might not be in court as a petitioner, or whether I was free from any legal proceedings.

I wished to hear something of the conversation which passed among the ladies of these provincial potentates, and standing at the door of a small drawing-room, overheard what follows:—"Ah, mother, * what a superb cap you have got! Have you really brought it from the fair?" "No, mother; direct from Moscow from the *Kooznetzky most*,† from a French *madame*." "But your dress, ma'am, is it sewed here?" "Lord have mercy upon us! I have already got those home-bred sempstresses of the lady of the *Dvorensky Predvodeétl*!‡ They can shape and sew; but, mother,

* Mother is used among acquaintances and among the lower orders in place of 'madam,' in conversation.

† Literally 'the blacksmith's bridge,' a fashionable street; in a word, the Bond Street of Moscow.

‡ Marshal of the noblesse, the same office as that of convener of the county in Scotland.

they cannot take the fashion from the fashionable engravings." "You really have the Journals written in French!" "Where is the harm; there is Matrena Ivanovna does nothing but sits reading French books from morning to night. If she had but the rumgumption to give directions to her sempstresses." - - - "You are right; there are tailors who write for the use of sempstresses, but every one cannot understand what an artizan writes in his own language." "That is true; there is Andrew Koosmeetch's son read me not long ago a description of a fashionable dress, but the dence take it if I could understand a word of it." "It is no wonder; they are a cunning people those French, who have words for expressing every stitch, every hook and every hem!" "But you, my dear, you have not yet shown off your new shawl; magnificent!" "And where did you buy it?" "My Seedor Yermolayeveetch brought it with him from his out-post." "God save him!" "But your *fermoir*, where was it bought, my dear gossip?" "In Petersburgh."—"Yes, I saw it on the contractor's wife." "My Karp Karpeetch got it from him in payment of a debt, and at a dear price, mother." "How can a contractor be in debt?" "You would not have an advocate to be indebted to a contractor." "That is true, mother." "By the bye, has Aquilina Semenovna Padtchereetzen been with you? From her husband's affairs there hangs a tale." "She has been." "And she was with me." "And with me." "Ah, mother, what a woman! She seems to be born for the law; for she scatters Ukazes about at no allowance! always sigh-

ing and complaining of poverty and straitened circumstances ; but what shawls, what pearls !” “ It is said that she did not forget herself when her husband was in place.” “ Why should she, she was surely no fool !” “ Both heart and head were engaged in the cause ?” “ Did you hear the anecdote of the big pearls which hang on her neck like a pad ; God forgive me !” “ No !” “ Ah, tell us, tell us !” “ When her husband was in power, the secretary durst not engross a decision without asking Aquilina Semenovna, and the petitioners were obliged to address themselves to her before they appeared in court with their petitions. One day there came to her an old woman with a handkerchief about her head and a strange looking *shoob*,* to petition in favour of her grandson whom the community had marked out for a recruit. After falling down at her feet, the old woman gave Aquilina Semenovna a little box, adding, “ Take this, ma’am ; if it does not suit you, it will do for your daughter.” Aquilina Semenovna thinking that the old woman was giving her a snuff-box, fell into a passion, screamed out with all her might in order that the country gentlemen who were in the adjoining room might hear of her disinterestedness, and gave the old woman a box of another sort in return. The box fell on the ground, and the pearls were scattered on the floor. What a pucker she was in ! There was Aquilina Semenovna sprawling on the floor, gathering up the pearls, and bawling out to her daughter Ashenka to come to her assistance. Ashenka flew to her from the other room,

* Fur coat.

but forgot to shut the door, so that the gentlemen saw the whole farce. One of them questioned the old woman on the street, and spread the news through all the government." "Ha, ha, ha!" "That was a lesson not to despise trifles. It is not for nought that Seedor Karpeetch always repeats :—'What is good to give is good to keep, and every gift is complete.'"

At this moment, we were called to dinner. The ladies were seated on one side at the upper end of the table and the gentlemen apart. I occupied a seat beside the sheriff. The dinner began with an immense fish-pye, which would have been large enough to hold our worthy hostess herself at full length. Cordials of all colours and denominations were summoned to assist the digestion of the pye, and were gulped down the throats of the guests in large draughts, to prevent any prejudicial effects from the unbaked crust and half-raw fish. A cold course followed the pye, consisting of pig with horse radish, calf's-foot jelly, ham, &c. The cold portion behoved to be warmed, and the cordials were again called in, along with Madeira, which sparkled beautifully in beer-glasses. Highly seasoned Russian *shtchee* * had also to be dissolved in the stomach with Madeira; and thus by the time that we arrived at the first dish after the *shtchee*, there was already a fine colour on the foreheads of our worthy company, and their noses blushed like cran-berries. It was here that I first understood the real meaning of the Russian proverb :—'The first glass like a stick, the second like a

* Cabbage soup, usually seasoned with sour cream.

hawk.' The only difference with us consisted in their swallowing like hawks not glassfuls but tumblerfuls and bottlefuls. By the time that some dishes with sauces went round, before the appearance of the roast, all the guests, (except the *Capitan Eespravnik*, myself, and Meloveeden), were in a disposition of mind fit for climbing a battery. Wine soaked the hard hearts of law, and openness arose with its fumes and settled upon their tongues. "Marteeneetch," bawled the secretary of the Zemsky Dood,* so loudly that the windows shook; "Marteeneetch! - - - you deceived me, you wretch, and let the bear out of my toils. I would not forgive you for an age, if your wife were not my gossip." "Don't get into a passion; you have given us quite enough of that; if you had had the skinning of the bear, you would not have left us a lock of the fleece. You cannot deny that you are a first-rate hand at gutting petitioners, Karp Karpeetch; at the same time you must not forget that I have also a wife and children to provide for." All the company laughed; "Nobody can deny Karp Karpeetch's skill in gutting," was echoed from all corners. The Secretary proudly turned about in his chair, stroked his head and paunch, and said, with an air of importance, "Why should an experienced tradesman flinch from his business."—"Respectable gentlemen!" cried out from the end of the table a thin bald-headed sawy-complexioned lawyer with a weak shrill voice, "The sum total of human wisdom is inscribed on a Dutch

* The district-court.

ducat. All the Latin which I learned at school is not worth that single inscription : ‘*Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt,*’ that is to say, ‘Property is kept together by good agreement.’ It follows from that, that if the gentlemen of the bench wish to have ducats, they must live in peace and concord, be of one mind in their decisions, and listen to their secretary. It may also be affirmed, that the knight whose figure is upon the ducat, is no other than a Secretary, and the bundle of arrows in his hand, denotes that he ought to hold all the business of all the judges in his hands !” “Bravo, Cleemeetch, bravo !” exclaimed the lawyers in extacy. “Hold in his hands” added the Secretary ; “yes, if he has iron gloves !”

In the meantime, a hamper of Champagne was brought into the room, and toasts were circulated. After drinking the health of the lady of the house, her husband, and at last of every guest and his wife separately, his children, his man-servants and maid-servants, they fell a drinking in good earnest, for the purpose of discussing the contents of the bottles. When they had finished the hamper, they then rose from the table, and made a shift to get into the drawing-room.

I have made no mention hitherto of my neighbour the *Capitan Eespravnik*. He took no part either in the drinking or the conversation of the honourable company, and kept silence till dinner was over. The guests also did not address themselves to him ; for, knowing his ways, they were afraid lest he should tell them to their face any blunt truth usually styled rude-

ness. After dinner the *Capitan Eespravnik* invited me and Meloveeden into the garden which lay opposite the dining-room, where, among fruit-trees planted without any regularity, there were growing, sun-flowers, poppies, and pæonias. We sat down on a turf-seat, and the *Capitan Eespravnik* said :—" It is with pleasure I observe, that you have no propensity to empty glasses after the example of my worthy colleagues. You may easily judge of my melancholy condition," added he, turning to Meloveeden, " on seeing with what people an old officer has to spend his life. But necessity wears a stone. These leeches of law would have long since stopped my breath, if I had not fortunately or unfortunately been connected by my sister's marriage with one of their chosen vessels, and had not been in favour with the Governor, my former General. It is difficult to swim against the current; and it is the utmost that I can do to fence off my part of the government from their inroads. The noblesse elected me, and allowed me as a maintenance hardly a sufficiency to live upon. If you remain longer here, you will hear more of Shtweekoff, and I beg you will not form an opinion of the whole district from what you have hitherto seen and heard. There are here honourable and noble people among the landholders and officers chosen by them; but as our gentry unfortunately do not study the practice of Russian law, and few of them are accustomed to put their thoughts on paper, those who have been brought up in the civil service decline being elected, as they prefer to live at ease on their estates: hence it follows as a matter

of course, that the lawyers have the ball at their foot. This is a particular breed in old Russia, which lives, like the moth, on the dust of Ukazes. I advise you to go home, if you do not wish to have your feelings still more shocked. Perhaps it may come to pass that the guardians of justice will pull one another by the hair when they bring matters to a further explanation." The *Eespravnik* rose, and we followed his advice. In the meantime several of the guests entered the garden, arm-in-arm, and singing songs. On returning to the house in order to find our caps, we observed that several of them were seated at a card-table, playing at faro, and at another table, at *gorka*, and pocketfuls of bank-notes began to pass from hand to hand.

On arriving at home, we called for the landlord that he might explain to us some things which were to us incomprehensible. "Explain to us, we beseech you," said I, "what sort of a *lusus naturæ* that *Eespravnik* of yours is?"

"He goes under the name of Tchudak* among us," replied the landlord. "In reality, Michael Ivanoveetch Shtweekoff is not in the least like his comrades, and, owing to that, appears singular to all. He springs from the small gentry of this district. He entered the military service when he was quite young, and at his parents' death, gave his share of the inheritance to the orphan daughters of his deceased sister who had married an honest but poor civilian. His other sister you know. On his obtaining a majority and retiring

* A prodigy.

from the service on account of his wounds, he lived here in my house upon his small pension, till the freeholders offered him the situation of Sheriff. Michael Ivanoveetch declared resolutely that he could not take a bribe, and would not learn to do so, and therefore did not wish to accept a situation which was attended with additional expenses. The freeholders at last prevailed on him to accept of it, and assigned him a certain sum of money for his chancery and travelling expences, with the knowledge of government. He has been already ten years *Eespravnik*, and all the honest people bless him. All the assessments, the repairs of roads, carriage of stores and billets, are levied among us with the greatest exactness, by rotation, and according to the number of souls.

“The collection of taxes and arrears is managed without any remission, but with the greatest condescension to the poor. Deserters and vagabonds dare not shew their faces in our district: the country people, knowing that their apprehension is agreeable to the wishes of their worthy *Eespravnik*, whom they call their father, have entirely given up harbouring them, and immediately bring them to justice. Judicial investigations are carried on without threatening or flogging, but with rigid justice. At the fairs, Michael Ivanoveetch does not take money from the merchants for permission to sell smuggled goods, or to deceive the unwary by bad articles, but looks after order, and the weights, measures, and qualities of the merchandize. At the levies of recruits, the starosts and delegates of the crown-villages do not dare to go out of

the regular order, and deprive of their last support unprotected parents. The bailiffs of private estates, the proprietors of which live in the capitals, cannot oppress the peasants and deceive their masters. Even the vicious and wicked masters, who, thank God, are very rare, cannot use their own serfs in an illegal manner. In a word, Michael Ivanoveetch, day and night, labours to eradicate mischief, to increase truth, and fulfil the laws. It is true that he is rough in his demeanour, does not like to waste words to no purpose, does not know how to soften down a bitter truth with fine speeches, and fulfil his duty with compliments. He is strict with culprits, implacable towards the wicked, and condescending merely to weakness, in deed, though not in words. He would have long since fallen a prey to the artifices of the lawyers and the devices of the abusers of power, if he had not been supported by our Governor, who is an honest, well-meaning man, likewise a soldier,* with whom he had been acquainted in the army.

“ All honest men love and respect Michael Ivanoveetch : wicked men hate him, and fear him like the pestilence. In other respects, he does not meddle with what does not belong to him, and only requires that other people should not interfere with his business. Such a man is our Tchudak ! He has treated you rather strictly, but it is according to law, and although he behaved rudely, however he did not insult you, or help himself to any of your property, like the

* General Von Essen.

custom-house gentry." "I am quite of a mind," added Meloveeden, "that sour medicine is better than sweet poison."

CHAPTER XIX.

Conversation upon business with a Russian Merchant.—A turbulent man.—End of a Malefactor.

OUR landlord invited us to drink tea with him. We found with him the parish clergyman, and a decently dressed man of the middle age, whose behaviour and address shewed that he had been accustomed to live in good society. Our landlord introduced his guest to us, calling him Peter Petróveetch Veertooteen. We seated ourselves around an oaken table, drank tea, and entered into a discussion concerning subjects which appeared to me extremely important, as this was the first time that I ever heard any conversation upon public affairs.

“Would not you think it strange, even incomprehensible, gentlemen !” said the merchant, “if in all the ports of France there were none but Dutch and Germans, or in the ports of England none but Spaniards, and Italians, who carried on the foreign trade, and if the French and English were merely occupied like camels in carrying merchandise from the interior to the sea-shore, for the sole purpose that foreigners might reap incredible profits, without labour, without trouble, without responsibility, with nothing to begin with, but the brass-plate engraved, ‘*Kontóra,*’

(counting-house) on their doors?" "I would say decidedly," replied Peter Petróveetch, that if the natives of the country work like oxen, allowing foreigners to cut beef-steaks out of their carcasses, that is to say, if the natives work for the enrichment of *parvenus*, who trade upon their labour, these *indigenes* must certainly have either an insufficiency of mother-wit, or money, or honesty, to be themselves merchants."

"That is too harsh a judgment," replied the priest: "I would say that probably some other ruling passion withdraws the natives from foreign trade, and puts all its advantages into the hands of interlopers."

"You would both have grounds for these opinions," said the merchant; "but fortunately you are in the right, father. I shall endeavour to explain the matter. I speak of our dear country. Is it not strange, is it not humiliating to national pride, that in Russia almost all the foreign trade is carried on by aliens, in their counting-houses and factories, which are established in the ports, and even in the capitals, as if Russia were another China or Japan? Foreign merchants and manufacturers carry on their business entirely with these counting-houses; and we Russians must lift up our eyes to these counting-house gentlemen, to be allowed to furnish them with what they want for exportation, or to buy from them foreign produce at whatever prices they please to fix in their common council. These foreign counting-house gentry, to whom we give the title of *negociants*, pay no more regard to the Russian merchants than they do to their own warehouse-

porters, as if it were a charity to give us the hundredth part of their profits. Tell me, gentlemen, do you think this course of events will continue for ever, and that we shall always remain in the same backward state, as we were when Richard Chancellor discovered Archangel in the reign of the Tzar Ivan Vasilyeveetch? It appears to me, that we have all the means to constitute a respectable commercial class. The capacity, penetration, and prudence of our people gets its due from foreigners themselves. Our honesty in trade is really not less than that of our benefactors the foreign counting-house gentlemen; and as to capital, we will always have the superiority, as we hold in our hands the raw produce of our soil and native manufactures. On the contrary, the counting-house men have often nothing to begin with, as I said before, but the brass-plate with the inscription, '*Kontóra*' upon their door, and some bankers' letters of recommendation."

"Some bankers' letters of recommendation! There you have it," exclaimed Peter Petróveetch. "Tell me, my dear Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, whom would you trust most; an old townsman whose good character you have long known, or a strange merchant of whom you know nothing?" "Of course I would sooner trust my townsman," replied the merchant. "But with your leave, Peter Petróveetch, if this comparison is applicable to our discussion, I think that the Russian merchants should with more reason be compared to the old townsman."

"To appearance but not in reality," returned Peter Petróveetch. "You, Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, have

traded for fifty years, and know all the principal merchants in Moscow and Petersburg. Count over to me, if you please, half a dozen Russian families which have been known in trade since the days of their great grandfathers?"

"I confess I do not know one," replied Seedor Yermoláyeveetch. "Among us, as soon as a merchant grows rich, he either becomes bankrupt from ceasing to live like his brethren, throwing up his business, assuming the style of a nobleman, and marrying his daughters to beggarly Princes and Counts, or gets drunk with ostentation and joy, and leaves his property to be plundered by rogues of clerks, and spendthrifts of children, who are ashamed of following their father's profession, and hunt after ranks; or lastly, he may himself attain personal nobility by different by-ways, under the mask of his zeal and services to the state. It is true we have no old commercial houses, and there is hardly one distinguished Russian firm in the empire, which can go farther back than the reign of the Empress Catherine the Second."

"Trade is supported by credit, and credit by the renown and antiquity of a family," said Peter Petróveetch. "In England, in France, in the German Hanseatic towns, in Holland, in Sweden, and in Denmark, you will find mercantile houses whose firm has been known for the course of centuries, and is more to be depended upon than the escutcheons of Princes. But amongst us, merchants are mere birds of passage in trade! One of our merchants appears on the stage, grows fat, climbs the hill, and then either

descends or takes his pleasure, powdering himself with the dust of heraldry."

"It is true, really true!" added the merchant, stroking his beard. "I shall mention another circumstance," said Peter Petróveetch. "Among us, there are few merchants who make fortunes in the way of ordinary trade; but it is mostly in government contracts that they make their money. The contractors and farmers of the revenue cannot, in my opinion, be called either merchants or negociants. For he only confers a real benefit on the trade of his native country, who extends it beyond its frontiers, and favours the consumption of our produce abroad.* It is thus that the wealthy foreign houses and manufacturers are obliged involuntarily to carry on their business in Russia by means of counting-houses, the occupiers of which are recommended to them by old established mercantile families of respectability with whom the persons recommended have been formerly clerks. How is it possible to have extensive transactions with people who come, God knows from whence, and disappear, God knows how and whither, from the scene of action."

"That is true," said the clergyman. "But do not attach too much blame to the merchants. There are very many circumstances which oblige them to leave their profession at the first favourable opportunity. In the first place." — — — On a sudden there was a noise raised in the passage. The landlord was on

* 'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.'

his way thither; but he had scarcely risen from his chair, when the door opened with a bounce, and into the room with a howl ran a huge mastiff-dog. Then appeared a gentleman in a travelling dress, with a pipe between his teeth, and behind him a footman and an understrapper of the Police. In the meantime, as the dog was smelling about all the corners of the room, and his master was undressing himself without more ado, the policeman said: "Here is a lodger for you, Seedor Yermoláyeveetch:—his *High-well-born-ship** is come from Petersburg on government business, and you are so fortunate, that your house has taken his fancy." "Have mercy upon us; there are already six men in the government-service quartered upon me," replied the landlord: "besides that, the *Capitan Eespravnik* ordered me to take in these two gentlemen." "Hold your tongue, long beard!" said the man of office, casting a grim look at the respectable old man. "I wish to have no further acquaintance either with thee or thy *Capitan Eespravnik*, and will remain here because it pleases myself." The landlord turned to the policeman, and said: "But the neighbouring houses are quite unoccupied." "How can you compare your house with your neighbour's houses?" replied the policeman. "They are gentlemen in office, people of rank; you know that with them lodges the Governor, the Procureur.— — — Enough, enough, Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, if we have not

* As this compound forms one word in Russian, it is here translated literally, in order to give the reader an idea of Russian titles of honour.

merchants to answer all purposes, what order would there be? It is strong men who should carry burdens, and you are the richest of them all." The policeman went out, and the man of office said; "Move about now, old one; your brotherhood here seem to have a fine time of it, when you dare to be so contumacious!" "I make no objections," replied the merchant; "but I and my family have only three small rooms remaining, and I do not know where to lodge you." "I shall take two, and you can occupy the third," said the man of office: "and if you are too crowded, you can betake yourself to the pantry. Observe what airs this boor gives himself!" "I am no boor, Sir, but a merchant." "But do you think that is not all the same?" replied the man of office, with a laugh. "He who is not a nobleman, what can he be but a boor?" We left the room, and the landlord followed us. "Gentlemen!" said he, "we have found out the reasons why merchants do not like to remain in their profession. This is a small sample of the respect which the other classes pay us. But you have not yet seen the thousandth part of our vexations, and when you see them, recollect the good features in our character, and do not lay the blame where it is not due!" The clergyman shrugged up his shoulders, and without saying one word, went home. The landlord had to remain to make room for his new lodger, while we with Peter Petróveetch went to take a walk in the outskirts of the town.

—"It is amongst us here as it is every where; every thing will go its own course," said Peter Petró-

veetch, "till civilization circulates through all classes of the community. It is only the man of education and refinement who can in full measure be sensible of his duties to others, and can respect all his fellow-creatures. The well educated man knows that in a properly regulated empire, every profession is respectable, and as necessary as all the strings of an instrument to produce harmony. Ignorance erects a barrier between them, and it is from exactly the same motives as a Turk when he regards a Christian subject of the Porte as no man, that our haughty ignoramus despise all who are not related to them, and who cannot give them ranks and orders. For example, is not your landlord a respectable man in every point of view? Whence is that? Because he is sensible and well informed: it is a pity that he did not receive a systematic education in his youth; in that case he would have been a hundred times more useful to his country. Seedor Yermoláyeveetch draws his origin from the sooty crown-serfs. He was left an orphan by the death of his parents, engaged as a shopman with a merchant who was a distant relation of his own; and by his industry, attention, and good behaviour, has scraped together a little property, improved himself by reading, intercourse with well-informed people, reflection and experience. He is educating his sons at the university, putting himself to straits in order that they may enjoy the first of earthly benefits—the first requisite of an immortal soul. You have seen that worthy clergyman, father Eugenius.—He may also serve as an example that education does

not interfere with the performance of the clerical duties of his profession. On the contrary, by raising his spiritual character in the eyes of the people, he confirms them more in faith and morality, eloquently illustrated by the pastors of our church, and strengthened by the example of their blameless lives." In the course of our conversation upon various subjects, we could not avoid touching upon the circumstances of Peter Petróveetch Veertooteen's own life. We were quite astonished when he told us that he was not a native of the place, but lived there a prisoner at large.—We begged him to explain to us the cause of this singular occurrence, and Peter Petróveetch related to us as follows :—"My father was a poor nobleman, and had no means for his subsistence, but his small salary. He married the daughter of a merchant well in the world, and received a dowry of about fifty thousand roubles.* My mother died in bringing me into the world. My father then quitted the service and employed himself in my education. I had masters to instruct me in the sciences, but my father was himself my superintendent in the moral department. He imbued my mind with an unlimited devotion to the throne, under the persuasion that such an extensive empire as ours, composed of so many various tribes, can neither be happy nor powerful except under the rule of an absolute monarch. From my tender years my father inoculated my mind with the wholesome truth that there is no more elevated morality than what is contained in the

£2000 sterling.

precepts of the gospel. He allowed me to read all sorts of philosophical compositions, but would frequently repeat :—" My son, the apostle Paul says in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, " Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good." In the works of philosophers you will find much sense and still more sagacity, but nowhere will you find such rules for life as in the Gospel. In the works of philosophers you will also find many virtuous lessons, but nowhere will you find such elevated morality, such consolatory truths as in the Apostolic precepts. All the morality which is diffused through a thousand books of philosophy is included in the few words addressed to the Apostles ; " And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." (Luke chap. vi.) And again, " But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you," (ibidem.) My dear son, fulfil these two rules, and you will fulfil all your duty." My father was neither a bigot nor a hypocrite, but a real Christian, and by his living example confirmed me in the rules which he prescribed for me. After finishing my education, I entered the military service, On setting out for my regiment, my father blessed me after the manner of our Saviour, in the words of the Apostle : " Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour." (Paul's Epistle to Ephesians, chap. iv.)

" As I grew up in years I grew more confirmed in the rules which had been sown in my heart by my worthy parent, and became the more persuaded of the truth

that every man should assist his neighbour by all the means in his power. Every act of injustice done to any one by any one, made a strong impression upon me ; unfortunately I could not restrain my tongue, but exclaimed loudly against all abuses. We were quartered in the exuberant Ukraine, and the rich farmers shared their food with our gallant soldiers, who, during their vacant hours, assisted them in field-work.— The farmers did not wish to receive the government allowance, and I was the means of its being regularly sold for the benefit of the soldiers. At the settling of the ammunition and company-money, and on the pay-days, I always took the soldier's part. It is difficult always to squeeze the truth into delicate, soft forms, and I found myself frequently obliged to speak bitter truths, to quarrel and complain when they did not attend to me. I consequently got the name of a *turbulent man*, and was obliged to leave the regiment.

“ My father, who was now old and weakly, wished me to remain at home with him. I entered the civil service in the capital, in the judicatory department, to lose no opportunity of doing good to my country.— Here was an extensive field for my activity. My father was not a little vexed that I had been obliged to leave the military service against my inclination.— “ You fulfilled your duty ; this is your reward and consolation,” said he embracing me. When in due course I had to enter upon my new occupation, he called me into his closet, and pointing to the New Testament, which was lying open before him, requested me to read in the Epistle of Paul to Timothy,

chapter v. verse 20, 'Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear !' He then pressed me to his heart, blessed me and said, "Go, in God's name, and fight for truth !"

"I was like a watch-dog in the Temple of Justice, barked on the unconscientious abusers of the laws, did not allow the strong hand of villainy to profane the interior of the sanctuary, and shielded the unfortunate widow and orphan from their oppressors. Chicanery and usury directed all their forces against me. Men of business, who are indispensable to their superiors, as they do not know business themselves, declared that they could not live with such a *turbulent man* as I was, so I was ordered to retire.

"In the meantime my father died, and I was left in the world a solitary individual, with a moderate property. My father made no attempts to increase his capital, supposing that my mother's dowry would be enough for me, and employed his overplus revenue in assisting the poor. I followed his example, and, sharing it in a brotherly manner with the poor and needy, I protected them at the same time from the oppression of the powerful. I could not refuse my advice to the unfortunate, and even assisted to write petitions for those who had no protector, and who did not know how to repel chicanery and persecution by the power of eloquence and juridical skill. I interfered personally in behalf of the poor, and sometimes frightened the most inveterate usurers by my presence. I had to bear daily with a thousand disgusts ; but I spent my time laboriously. I consoled myself with the thought that

I obeyed the wishes of my father, and that the bitterness of disgust was more than counterbalanced by the sweet consolation which I procured for the suffering. I was happy ! A few good friends, with the pleasures arising from the sciences and literature, kept up my spirits, which malicious people wished to poison by their slander.

“ Clouds are formed from vapours ; rain is composed of drops ; calamity arises from slander, allegations, and instigations ; and malicious expressions, taken in connection, form the thunder storm in the moral world, which darts its bolts on the innocent. I gave no dinners, supposing that it was better to feed the poor with my superfluities than to saturate *gourmands* ; lent no money to spendthrifts, and was called a niggard. I went to the ordinary places of worship along with the people, and did not appear in uniform in the domestic chapels of grandees, and was called a godless man. Knowing that a monarchical government can have no other end consistent with its interests but the welfare of the governed, I never murmured against government, but exclaimed loudly against the abusers of power, who, regarding their places as farms on lease, thinking on nothing but their own enrichment, and the placing of their relations, raised a hue and cry against me as a *sedition man*. I praised with a sincere heart such of the grandees as deserved it, and such of the people in public situations as were honest, and set them up for an example in contrast to the wicked and selfish ; therefore, I was called an intriguer and a partizan. Frequently from inability to keep my indigna-

tion within bounds, I set forth the truth in strong terms, in petitions written by me for others, and called things by their real names ; therefore, I was called *a wrangler*. From all the qualities ascribed to me, they formed one aggregate term—a *turbulent man*, and banished me to this town under the surveillance of the police. I confess, I was at first melancholy ; but the worthy clergyman Eugenius consoled me and comforted me. “ You have laboured not for the world, but for your immortal soul,” said father Eugenius ; “ consequently your reward will be spiritual. Recollect what the Apostle Luke says : ‘ *But love your enemies and do good and lend, hoping for nothing again ; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest ; for He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil !* ’ Be not disquieted under your misfortune, and do not slacken in the path to bliss, recollecting the words of the Apostle Paul, ‘ It is true that no chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous ; nevertheless it afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.’ I am now quieted and happy, for happiness is in the power of every one, and there is no place on the face of the earth without worthy people. I find pleasure in the friendship of the honest *Espiravnik*, the reverend clergyman Eugenius, and the merchant your landlord ; I spend my time in reading and walking, and do as much good as my means permit. Do not take this narrative of mine for self-commendation. No ! I am free from that vice, and have declared to you the truth, for your instruction, in order

that you may profit by it. There will come a time when the truth shall prevail, and sooner or later, but with undoubted certainty, shall triumph over malice and falsehood."

On returning to the town on our way home, and passing by the town-prison, Peter Petróveetch proposed to us to enter and scatter the seeds of consolation in that abode of misery, as he called it. I had a few ducats in my purse, and cheerfully agreed to visit the *ostrog*, in order to alleviate in some degree the lot of the unfortunates. This *ostrog* was nothing more than a common *eezba*,* surrounded with a fence. On account of the smallness of accommodation, it was impossible to separate the people in custody according to the nature of their offences; and thence it happened, that the little thoughtless boy who had run away from his master in a frolic, was placed beside the veteran thief or robber, and became insensibly a proficient in the arts of iniquity. For want of room, there was also no possibility of maintaining cleanliness. The soldiers on guard were posted in the passages, and on both sides of the two *eezbas*: the prisoners were pent up like herrings in a barrel. I grew sick from the offensiveness of the air, and the impression made upon me by the sight of a pair of wild eyes. I beseeched my companions to take me into the fresh air. On a sudden we heard, in a little cell, piercing groans and strange cries. Curiosity led us thither, and a shocking spectacle presented itself before my sight. In a

* Peasant's log-house.

dark corner, on straw, there lay a half naked man, thin as a skeleton, and with his arms and legs in fetters. The light had scarcely penetrated his den, when he rose and seated himself, casting upon us a hideous gaze. Our eyes met, and I trembled all over as at the look of a basilisk. The black hair and eyes of the wretch were dishevelled; his face was overcast with a deadly paleness, and his eyes which were red with sleeplessness and suffering, looked like glowing coals.

After a short silence, the unfortunate wretch raised his fettered arms, first to his forehead, and then to his heart, and said in a low tone:—"Fire! fire!" then opening his mouth wide, whispered, "Water!" A sergeant gave him a wooden pitcher, and he, after drinking it, tossed it from him, and called out loudly, "Away, away! blood, blood!" On a sudden his hair stood on end; the features of his face moved convulsively, his eyes became fixed in their sockets, and the foam issued from his mouth: he gnashed with his teeth, rose up rapidly and cried out, "I am Nojoff!" "Nojoff!" exclaimed I simultaneously with Meloveeden. It really was the malefactor, whom I did not at first recognize from his altered situation; but when he pronounced his name, I immediately recollected his features.

In the meantime the poor wretch again fell on his litter, and called out with a tremendous voice. "Do not burn me, do not burn me; but kill me at one blow!" My legs could hardly support me; I was so agitated, the blood ran to my heart, and my head be-

came dizzy; but I remained in the place, expecting that Nojoff would recover from the fit, and would tell me the name of the Countess who was my enemy. The culprit was again silent and shut his eyes. Meloveeden called him by name. Nojoff opened his eyes as if he heard him. "Nojoff!" said Meloveeden, "Vejeeghen forgives you for all the ill that you have done him." Nojoff again sat up upon the straw, and looking around him, said: "Where is Vejeeghen? He died in the *steppe*. I myself threw him into a pit. The countess did not wish him to be murdered." — — At these words Nojoff again fell into a fit, shut his eyes, and snored terribly. I could no longer endure this shocking spectacle, and left the *ostrog*.

"You know that malefactor?" inquired Peter Petróveetch. "Unfortunately," replied I. "To-morrow I shall relate to you the particulars of my acquaintance with him: but at present I am so distracted that I cannot arrange my thoughts." Peter Petróveetch accompanied us home: I spent the whole evening, without leaving the room, and passed a sleepless night, impatient to learn from Nojoff the secret of my persecution. Next morning I sent to the *ostrog* to enquire how the unfortunate man was, but was told that he had given up the ghost in extreme agony soon after our departure.

Peter Petróveetch, to whom I related part of my adventures, and who had heard of Vorovaateen, advised me to be very careful to whom I mentioned my secret, for fear of falling into any greater calamity. "In a court of law you will make nothing of

Vorovaateen : as you have no witnesses, Vorovaateen may say that the Kirgheez took you prisoner by force. Besides, if you mix up your affair with any family of rank, you will get into trouble. It will be best of all to get what information you can by circuitous means ; and if you only learn the name of your female persecutor, the secret will come out of itself. You have seen, by Nojoff's example, that hardness and fearlessness in crime end in the horrors of disease : at the same time that a virtuous sufferer has all the enjoyment arising from the hope of a better life to console him in his last moments, a wicked man is assailed with the remorse of conscience, the most frightful of the tortures of hell. Vorovaateen at the first attack of violent illness, or the first danger, will shew as much pusillanimity as all malefactors, and will reveal the truth to you. Crime unrepented of ends in despair ; but immoveable firmness is peculiar to virtue alone !"

END OF VOLUME I.

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IVAN VEJEEGHEN.

CHAPTER I.

A landholder, like whom, God grant, there were more in Russia!—Like priest, like people.

By our good conduct and the favourable representations of Peter Petróveetch, we gained the good opinion of the *Capitan Eespravnik*, who sometimes called upon us, invited us to drink tea with him, and allowed us to take excursions without the town. One day, when we were at his house with Peter Petróveetch, the conversation turned upon the difficulties which the country police meets with in keeping order over a wide extent of country, in a thinly peopled district, intersected with impassable morasses and woods. "Catch a vagrant who can," said the *Capitan Eespravnik*, "if a landholder and his peasants choose to conceal him! You would require a thousand rank and file to catch a single individual in a wood which covers one or two hundred versts!" "The landholders have a great trust to answer for before their Maker,

their emperor, and their country, for every thing which is done within their possessions," said Peter Petröveetch. "On a landholder depends all the happiness, the morality, the education, and the prosperity of his peasants; consequently, on the landed gentry collectively depends all the morality, education, and prosperity of the whole of Russia. The government places no obstacles to bar the progress of the noblesse to education and prosperity. No affectionate father cares more for the education and happiness of his darling son, than the Russian emperors care for the Russian noblesse. But why should the Russian noblesse behave like the man in the parable who hid his lord's talent in the earth? The nobleman having received it should divide it, should increase among his people their attachment to the throne, their love to their country, and excite them to morality by his own example." "That is all true," said the Sheriff; "but, in the opposite case, the noblesse will be like the barren fig-tree of which mention is made in Luke's Gospel, (chapter xiii.) A nobleman, as the favourite son of an affectionate father, ought to employ himself all his lifetime in fulfilling the will and good intentions of the common father of Russia. A nobleman who lives on his own estates, should esteem himself as much in actual service as if he sat at the imperial council-board, or was commander-in-chief of the forces. A nobleman is the head police-officer on his estate, collector of the emperor's taxes, overseer who apportions the district rates, judge of equity among his peasants, guardian of their health and property, and

director of the parish-school." "Excellent, excellent, Peter Petróveetch!" exclaimed the *Capitan Eespravnik*, throwing himself to embrace Veertooteen, and adding, "That is as it should be; the district-police would be then a real executive power, which could enforce order and regularity where it was wanted, by the power of law, in cases where persuasion had no effect!" "It will be so in the course of time, at the ripening of the fruits of education, the seeds of which are so uninterruptedly sown by our wise monarchs; when we shall have a sufficient number of first-rate Russian teachers for the education of our youth in the Russian fashion, not after the manner of the French or English." "These Russian foreigners have been long a bone in my throat," said the *Capitan Eespravnik*. "I have more respect for a French cook or an English coachman, than for a Russian bit of a *Knez*,* who apes Lords and Marquisses in their whims and singularities. There came, not long since, to live on his estate here, a young weather-cock who had left the service, conceiving himself ill used because his commanding officer had told him that he was not fit to occupy a distinguished situation, he not being able to write three lines logically and grammatically. *Knez* Slabogóloveen had read some French pamphlets upon politics by the assistance of his governor, and as he subscribed for some English newspapers, he fancied

* *Knez* is the highest title of Russian nobility, and corresponds with Duke in English, but is generally translated 'Prince.' As titles are extended to the whole family of those who possess them, it may be easily conceived that there is a considerable number of such princes in the Russian empire.

himself a great politician, and born to be a lawgiver to his country. Along with the fumes of champaign, he had filled the heads of his blind companions with rules of philanthropy and wisdom out of Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, and passed for a liberal, an orator, and a stickler for the rights of man. After taking this false step on the road of ambition, he came to his estate —, and do you know what was the end of his philosophy?" "Doubtless he began to establish country-schools, and exert himself for the improvement of his peasants," said Meloveeden. "You have not hit the nail on the head," said the *Capitan Eespravnik*, laughing. "The Government which cares for the welfare of its subjects in reality, though not in empty words, was obliged to take into its own hands the guardianship of the property of this eloquent orator of the human race, owing to his barbarous treatment of his peasants and destructive management of his estates. Listen to bawlers of this stamp after a sumptuous dinner, or of an evening amongst a crowd of young people: they will treat you to a dissertation on the happiness of mankind or on legislation; but at their own houses, and in every place under their controul, they are would-be Bashaws. The real friend of mankind does not cry out nor bawl against the laws of the land or established order, but contenting himself with things as they are, does as much good as is in his power; and much good can be done always and every where,* if there be only an in-

* A maxim borrowed from the experience of one of the most celebrated nations of antiquity: see Exodus, chapter fifth.

clination to do it ! Among us, the practice of good must be brought to much greater perfection before we meddle with theory. Do you know what I would propose, Peter Petróveetch ? Take these gentlemen to our friend Alexander Alexandroveetch Rossiyan-éenoff. You will see what people among us are hid under a bushel ; I will give you my own horses. Move about, gentlemen, you have had a long stay in our little town !”

Next morning we set out on our visit to Mr. Rossiyanéenoff who lived on his estate which was twenty five versts* distant from the town. At the distance of fifteen versts, we observed an astonishing difference in the cultivation of the fields. In low places, trenches were every where cut to let off the water. The fields were properly measured off and manured ; and the meadows were free from mole-heaps and useless bushes. On the brink of a winding rivulet, a paved descent was formed from the pasture, that the cattle might drink without being wetted, or muddling the water. The road on both sides was planted with trees ; bridges were every where erected, and boggy parts of the road covered with spars. “ You may see,” said Peter Petróveetch, “ that we have entered the possessions of an orderly man ?” On arriving at the village, Meloveeden clapped his hands with admiration, and exclaimed ; “ Look what the whole of Russia could be and should be !” Well-finished wooden *eezbas* were erected in single rows on both sides of

* A verst is two thirds of an English mile.

the road. The windows were embellished with graven ornaments, and the court-yards all inclosed with high railings and with neat gates and roofs. The houses were placed at some distance from each other, as a precaution against fire. Between the houses were little gardens with fruit-trees. Behind the court-yards were orchards, and at their extremity, barns. At the end of the village stood a fine stone church, shaded with tall lime-trees. The priest's house was distinguished by its clean and neat appearance. Beside the church were some pretty little buildings for the use of the community. In one of them was established an infirmary and apothecary's shop; in another an hospital for the maintenance of the friendless, the infirm and the aged; in a third, the village storehouse and shop, containing such wares as are indispensable to peasants, as well as the first necessities of life; in the fourth, the village-school and *slovesnoy court*.* At the extremity of the village was a smithy, and in the middle a large well. The peasants of both sexes had a healthy appearance, and the young women were distinguished for their beauty, the natural consequence of contentment.† We met on the street neither dirty children, nor ragged women, nor drunken men. The

* Literally *court of words*, because in the ordinary courts of law the pleadings are carried on in writing. In towns the police-majors preside at these courts of words, but when the subject contested amounts to more than eighteen roubles, (about fifteen shillings sterling,) their jurisdiction ceases.

† If the happiness of the labouring classes is to be measured by their physiognomy, the Russians will not stand high on the European scale.

peasants' horses and cattle were of an excellent breed, and the machines and implements for agriculture were all in good order. We entered into one peasant's house in order to have a specimen of their domestic economy. The house had a cellar, and was divided into two halves, one with a chimney, the other without one. The first, which was composed of three divisions, was occupied by the family ; in the second they baked bread, boiled the victuals for themselves and drink for the cattle, dried their wet clothes when they returned from work in bad weather and the like. " I know some landholders," said Meloveeden, " who, seized with a foreign mania, took it into their heads to build German houses for Russian peasants, and to require of them as much cleanliness as in Germany. That is an absolute impossibility in this country, and not only does not add to the happiness of the peasant, but is a great incumbrance to his life. Our climate and local circumstances require a different structure for our houses than in Germany and England. It is impossible to build large stone houses for the peasants among us, because, in the first place, it is not every where that we have materials for that purpose, and in the second, because it costs dearer, and our peasants do not live in large families, and therefore have no necessity for a number of rooms, which must be heated in the greater part of Russia eight months in the year. Without a smoky *eezba* it is even difficult for a Russian peasant to live in our moist and cold climate in the northern governments : without it he would have no place to dry himself. The wish of doing

good frequently brings no advantage if it is carried into effect without a knowledge of local circumstances. In this respect, Mr. Rossiyanéenoff seems to understand his business." In the porch,* we saw *laptee*.† "That has still a smell of barbarity," said Meloveeden. Peter Petróveetch examined them with more attention, and said: "These are not *laptee* but *shmónee*, that is to say, coverings for the feet made of hemp. The use of *laptee* is less advantageous, as they require a great deal of wood."‡ "When do your peasants wear *shmónee*?" inquired he at a man whom he met: "I see that on the street they are all in boots." "When they go a fishing, my son: in the meadows during the hay-harvest, and in wood-work, they save the boots; and the feet too are not so comfortable in a boot as they are in a *lapta* made of well tarred twine." "Do you see that they make use of this sort of shoes only during work, and they are really much better adapted for this purpose than the wooden shoes of the French and German peasants. If the peasant amidst contentment has not given up the use of such a covering for his feet, it is a proof that it is useful and suitable for him."

Around the peasant's court-yard was a shed, where carts, sledges, ploughs, and harrows stood, and where

* A porch, or *seyneec*, as it is called in Russian, is almost indispensable to prevent the egress of the heat created by the stove.

† Bark-shoes plaited in the same way that list-shoes are made in this country, but much clumsier: they are the covering for the feet most commonly used by the Russian peasants.

‡ Being made of the bark of young birch trees.

they stabled the horses occasionally. At the end of the yard was a cow-house and stable, and beyond the house, a vapour-bath. I asked the mistress what they used for light in the winter-time. "Our neighbours," replied she, "the peasants of other masters, burn splinters of wood, father, but we light our *eezbas* with lamps supplied with hemp-oil. You see, we have not to buy the hemp-oil, my son ; for every woman among us makes her oil from the seed."—"Have you a drinking-house in the village?" asked Meloveeden. "God forbid, my worthy fathers!" replied the woman. "In old times when our former *báreen** was alive, there was a drinking-house here : so our peasants got drunk regularly on holidays, and were out of sorts on working days. But, now, thank God, there is an end to that. And our parson, God save him, talks to us in the church that it is a great sin to get drunk, and our surgeon tells us that spirits shorten the life, and our master forbids us to drink, and hates drunkards ; so drunkenness is at an end, and both man and money are better housekeepers. It is another affair, at Easter, or a marriage, or a christening : then we brew beer, and our *báreen* himself gives us spirits. In our autumn and winter-work, our *báreen* also orders the labourers to drink a glass of vodky, but no more than one a piece. God save him ; he is a real father and no *ghospodeen*."

Five versts beyond the village, on the high bank of a river, stood the manor-house, built of wood on a

* One of the appellations given by the Russian peasants to their proprietor.

stone foundation, painted green, with a red roof. Behind the house a large garden extended towards the river. Around the court-yard were various establishments for domestic purposes. The symmetry of the parts shewed the skill of the architect, and the want of ornament was fully compensated by the neatness and solidity of the building. At the entrance, we were met by a servant neatly dressed, though very plainly. He said that his master had gone into the fields, but his mistress was superintending her daughters' lessons. We were met in the anti-chamber by the landlord's oldest son, a youth of sixteen years of age, who begged us to wait without impatience till his mother had finished her occupation. The youth's tall figure, rosy cheeks, and good address, shewed that as great pains had been taken on his physical education as on his moral. Peter Petróveetch, who was an intimate acquaintance of the family, proposed to us to look through the rooms and garden. The landlord's son, Alesba, undertook to be our guide. Passing through three saloons and a hall, which were distinguishable for nothing but their uncommon neatness, we entered Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's cabinet. It was a large room, around which were disposed immense shelves full of books in the Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, and Russian languages. In the middle of the room were three tables; on one lay newspapers and periodical works; on the other, papers in manuscript; and on the third, newly received books. In another room which was attached to the cabinet, there were shelves containing physical instruments, a chemical apparatus,

and models of various machines ; on the tables stood globes, and one side of the hall was hung with geographical maps. A small case with shelves contained within it a collection of minerals. " This smells of Europe ! " said Meloveeden. From thence we went into the garden, which contained neither artificial ponds which contaminate the air by their poisonous exhalations, nor dearly-built bridges on dry-land, nor grotesque summer-houses of a barbarous architecture, nor new ruins. The garden was filled with fruit trees and different berry-bushes, distributed very tastefully. Nut and lime-tree groves afforded an agreeable retreat in hot weather ; while a large alley round the garden, shaded with high trees, served for a promenade. On plots of grass were erected swinging ropes and different things to amuse children. At the end of the garden, on the south side, there was an orangerie, not a large one, but well constructed. " That is another luxury," said Meloveeden. " A luxury which is not only pardonable, but even useful," replied Peter Petrôveetch. " What can be more agreeable to an inhabitant of the north, than the fondling of the productions of more favoured climates ? The very contemplation of the diversity, riches, and liberality of nature, elevates the soul, and brings the creature nearer to the Creator.—Amidst these productions of various regions, thought descends upon the earthly globe. I will say more—why should we deprive ourselves of the satisfaction of raising the tender fruits which nature has denied our northern climate ? This is not the repletion of a shameful gluttony, but the satisfaction of a pardonable

curiosity. Besides, it appears to me a much more commendable occupation to raise the fruits of the earth, than to keep a variety of living creatures under restraint, and hurt the weaker animals." On a sudden a voice was heard behind us : we saw a man of a cheerful and healthy countenance, in a leathern cap and green camblet surtout, who was making up to us. It was the landlord himself. "How do you do, my friend," said he, stretching out his hand to Peter Petróveetch, who presented us to him, and in a few words related our proceedings. "I have already heard in part," added our landlord : "you will often be obliged here to listen to what you do not wish to hear. Walking newspapers are among us in greater circulation than printed ones. If one wishes to know the truth, he should only believe the hundredth part of the provincial news. I was told that two Russian gentlemen had arrived from India through the Kirgheezian *steppe*, where one had been a reigning prince, and the other his minister, and that they had brought with them whole barrels of ducats and bales of shawls. I am persuaded that, if these news reach another government, one of you will be transformed into the great Mogul, and the other into some terrible warrior.—Your treasures will be magnified to millions of ducats, and barrels filled with diamonds. But I beg you will enter the room—it is dinner-time."

On entering, the worthy landlord presented us to his wife and two daughters, of whom the oldest was fourteen and the youngest twelve years of age. The youngest son was ten years old. To our astonishment,

the lady of the house addressed us in Russian, and was dressed very plainly, although she received for the first time guests who passed for *millionaires*. The landlord presented to us also the teachers of his children, a Frenchman, Monsieur Instruí, and a German, Herr Hutman, whom he called his friends. It appeared to me singular that Mr. Rossiyanéenoff, whom Peter Petróveetch described as extremely patriotic and an enemy of foreign education, should keep in his house foreigners to teach his children. Peter Petróveetch perceived my astonishment, from the oblique glances which I cast on the foreigners, and communicated my observations to the landlord. Mr. Rossiyanéenoff took me and Meloveeden into another room, and said: "Be not astonished, gentlemen, that I employ foreigners in the education of my children. To deliver youth unconditionally into the hands of foreigners is our greatest folly, which has been the source of all sorts of mischief to the Russian noblesse: it is this which has made it almost a foreign colony in Russia, hardly knowing their mother-tongue, nor its customs, nor its history, but taught from their infancy to love every thing which is French and English, and despise every thing which is Russian. But to employ foreigners under the superintendence of parents, is proper and commendable, if people be selected for that purpose of a respectable moral character and behaviour, and not seekers of adventures and charlatans. Without a knowledge of foreign languages, a man can never acquire that refinement which is peculiar to Europeans. Other nations have got before us in the march of intel-

lect, and have more means of keeping continually ahead of us in the career of science. To translate every thing worthy of attention and curiosity which appears in foreign countries, would be impossible. To contrive from the resources of our own minds every thing which has been already discovered and invented, would be ridiculous, so that it is necessary to adopt the easiest means of acquiring the immense empire of knowledge, and those means are an acquaintance with foreign languages. By knowing them, you become a citizen of the world : you must agree that you must first become a *man* before you are either a Frenchman or a Russian. I love Russia more than my life. I wish its happiness more than I do that of my own children, and am willing to sacrifice for her my own life and that of my children, my property, and all my earthly comforts ; but it does not follow from thence, that I ought not to love foreigners, nor to avail myself of the productions of their minds and ingenuity. That would be a barbarism worthy of a Turk, a Chinese, or an Algerine. The first objects in the education of my children are the learning of their mother-tongue, with the history and statistics of Russia ; and my first and chief endeavour is to impregnate the minds of my children with an unlimited attachment to every thing pertaining to their native country. That is my part of the business. Amidst all this I do not conceal from them, that we have not yet arrived at that degree of refinement which is found in other nations : but, on the other hand, I excite a desire in their minds to raise their country, by the propagation of every thing which is good and

useful. The domestic education of my oldest son is now finished, and I intend next winter to send him to the university." We were called to the table, and Mr. Rossiyanéenoff put an end to his explanation.

The dinner consisted of four courses, prepared with taste and abundance. The wine did not run over the brim as they say; but after each course, every one of the company, except the children and ladies, had a large glass poured out to them of excellent wine.— Besides, there were decanters of water, small beer, *quass*, cyder, and wine made of apples and berries, which was an excellent drink, and sparkled like champagne, appearing to me much more agreeable than real wine. For a dessert we had beautiful ripe fruit. In addition to Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's family, the two teachers and ourselves, at the table were two retired officers, two old women, distant relations of the landlady, and the parish priest. I observed with satisfaction that all the guests without exception were served alike, both in regard to eating and drinking. That is not always the case with gentlemen who give poor people a place at their table. Mr. and Mrs. Rossiyanéenoff, on the contrary, behaved to all with extreme civility, nor did the landlord shew his wit at the expense of the poor people who enjoyed his hospitality. During dinner the conversation was of a general nature. After it was finished, we all went into the garden, and, waiting for coffee, took our seats under the shades of some dense lime trees. All at once the tears trickled from Meloveeden's eyes. He drew upon him the attention of all, as well as their sympathy, and ra-

ther disconcerted our entertainers. "You are melancholy," said the lady of the house. "No, madam; these are tears of contrition and not of melancholy. I am enraptured with your family happiness, the prosperity of your peasants, and the well ordered condition of your estate, and rejoice that you are Russians." The landlord squeezed Melovéeden's hand, and added, "What you say is true: we, or at least I, am happy in my family." Mrs. Rossiyanéenoff, in place of an answer, tenderly embraced her husband, and the children threw themselves about his neck, exclaiming, "Papa, you form all our happiness and all our joy!" One of the retired officers squeezed Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's hand; the other looked up to the heavens and crossed himself; the females went to kiss the hands of the worthy couple. An old servant who was bringing in coffee, shed tears in silence. Mr. Rossiyanéenoff was touched to the heart. "You see now whether I am happy," exclaimed he. "Can there be a greater bliss than that of being loved by worthy beings. Do not think, however, that my happiness has cost me much trouble. No! it is the kindness of Providence, for which I shall never cease to return thanks. I have endeavoured only to fulfil my duty as far as I have been able, nothing more. If you have any curiosity, I will relate my history to you in a few words.

"My father was an officer in the navy, and married for love, without having any means to support his family besides his pay. He remained in the service till he attained the rank of general, and owing to these circumstances could not give me and my sisters a splen-

did education. He attained riches by his bravery, taking some rich prizes in the Turkish war. His shattered constitution would not allow him to remain longer in the navy : he retired, bought this property, consisting of five hundred souls, and settled in the country. My sisters married as soon as their parents were able to give them a sufficient dowry. I entered the Guards, but had the misfortune to hurt myself by a fall from my horse, and was obliged by the doctor's advice to retire from the service. I was then no more than nineteen years of age. I was advised to live some years in a warm climate, to recruit my strength and take the benefit of the mineral waters. I employed that time in educating myself, went through a regular course of study in the university of Bologna, and afterwards completed my education in Paris. Returning to my native country with renovated health and fresh acquirements, I wished to be useful to my country in the civil service. At that time I had the misfortune to lose my parents, and was left a solitary individual in the world. After serving some years in a petty situation, and seeing that neither my endeavours nor my zeal, nor, I may venture to say, capacity and higher acquirements than those of my colleagues, were of any avail to raise me above the common herd, I began to cool in my zeal for the public welfare. An old friend of my father's, to whom I complained of my fate, cured me of my error, and pointed out to me the true road to happiness. " My dear friend ! " said he to me one day, " you have no family connections, and do not belong to the number of those children of for-

tune whose entire value consists in the name ; consequently you will be always doomed to support on your shoulders, amidst the chancery-dirt which lies at the foot of the hill of fortune, the incapacity of others, that it may be crowned by your services. You must wait for some extraordinary opportunity, one of those fortunate configurations of the heavenly bodies described in the calendars, ere the rays of the sun penetrate through the thick atmosphere of nepotism, and shine upon you, a gentleman of no family. There are exceptions, I do not dispute ; but to wait for such a chance requires an iron patience, which you do not possess. What is it that you seek ? It is to be useful to your sovereign and country, is it not ? You have the means in your own hands. You have five hundred souls of peasants. Dedicate yourself to their happiness. Believe me, you would not have a long time to wait, before the happiness of five hundred males, and probably as many females, would be dependent upon you. You are well instructed, you have read and travelled much, and consequently have many capabilities for managing your estate, making your peasants happy, and what is more, being an example to others. Economy is not difficult, and your *starost* with your own knowledge of local circumstances will be more useful to you than two courses of agronomy. The chief thing is to keep your expences within your income, and to apply the balance which remains in your favour, in the improvement of your own property, and of the condition of your peasants. Keep your wants within bounds, restrain your desires, and you

will have a surplus revenue : apply this to what is useful, and it will bring you contentment, comfort, and happiness !” Like a man blind from his birth, who, when he first recovers his sight after a successful operation, is enchanted with the view of objects of which he had no previous conception, I recovered the use of my mental faculties by the prescription of my real friend. This is his daughter !” added Mr. Rossiyan-
eenoff, pointing to his wife. “ I married, left the service, and settled on my estate. My father being old and infirm at the time when he retired to the country, could take no part in the management of his estate, and left it to me in the same condition as he had bought it. The fields were most wretchedly cultivated, the peasants in poverty, and in a half savage state as regarded their moral condition. In the course of twenty years, with God’s assistance, and the strenuous endeavours of myself and my wife, we have succeeded in bringing our property to the state in which you see it. I had no independent capital, and carried on my improvements entirely from my income, by degrees, making all the haste I could without precipitation, and building upon a solid foundation. God has blessed my exertions. Now all the young people on my estate know how to read, and comprehend their duty to God, the emperor, their master, and their equals. Without letters, gentlemen, it is impossible to implant morality in the minds of the people, or to give them a due conception of the duties which conduce to their real happiness. People cannot be instructed by the mere sense of hearing, and by dint

of repeated practice, as poodle dogs are drilled. Before a man be instructed, he must be able to read : what he reads he will recollect, and besides, the time employed in reading is no misspending of what might be applied to more useful purposes ; for the greater part of uninstructed people spend their leisure hours and days in irregularity. My peasants soon understood that I had their good in view, and assisted me in my objects with heart and soul. In this I was also greatly indebted to our worthy clergyman, who, in the midst of all his poverty, behaved himself in such a manner that the peasants could not but respect him. He took no participation in their drinking-bouts and amusements, but visited them only when he went to give them spiritual assistance, advice, admonition, or to perform his clerical duty. The reverend pastor ate his bread in the sweat of his face, working with his own hands a small plot of ground ; for except his legal provision, he would never take any thing from the peasants. He settled disputes, never in his own person giving occasion for dissatisfaction ; he never allowed in his presence any improper jokes, nor gave occasion to any himself. In a word, father Simeon was and is such a man as a parish clergyman should be—gentle, abstemious, humane, and serious in his behaviour. You saw him at dinner, gentlemen. His condition is now improved along with the condition of us all. I reckon it the first duty of a landholder to raise the clergyman to such a state that he can live independent of the peasants ; he will not till then be respected by his parishioners, but can *then* proceed without fear in correcting their moral conduct.

"Following the advice of my father-in-law, I began the management of my estate, not after the English or German fashion, but after a fashion suitable to our climate, soil, and manners. No new devices were carried into execution by me on a great scale, till I had made repeated trials of their effects upon a small. At last we finished our buildings, improved our fields, and nothing remains for us now to do but to maintain what we have done."

We passed our time in the company of the worthy Mr. Rossiyanéenoff and his family in the most agreeable manner, and at sun-set, departed for the town, not however without being earnestly pressed by the landlord and landlady to remain. I made haste to return, as the next day was that in which the post would arrive, and I was quite impatient for letters from Moscow. We promised to come another time and spend some days with the worthy Alexander Alexandro-veetch, and left him with a melancholy heart as if it were from our father's house. When we got beyond the gate, Meloveeden crossed himself, and raising his eyes to heaven, exclaimed: "God bless Russia, and grant her many more such landholders."

CHAPTER II.

A chip of the old block.—Silas Meeneetch Glazdooren.

WE went by another road in order to shorten the journey. On leaving Mr. Rossiyanéenoff's property and approaching a wood, we heard the sound of huntsmen's horns, the barking of dogs, and the shouting of sportsmen. On a sudden a fox leaped from an opening in the wood, and plunged into a field sown with corn.—He was quickly pursued by a pack of hounds and a dozen of horsemen. One of them, a man with long mustachios, galloped furiously in advance, without his cap, and his hair all in disorder, and bawled out, like a person beside himself, "*átoo ávo ! átoo ávo*" ! whipping and spurring his horse at the sametime. The fox in order to escape inevitable destruction by a change of course (a plan adopted not unfrequently by two-legged animals), suddenly turned off to the main road ; the dogs and sportsmen darted after him, pursuing furiously the weary creature. At last the fox, leaping across the ditch, threw himself directly among our horses' feet ; the dogs after him, and caught him. The eager sportsman, with the rapidity of a whirlwind, flew across the ditch, and seeing the dogs tearing the fox, began to chastise them with his whip, making a hideous noise at the same time. Our horses took fright

and began to rear themselves, when the bickering and snarling of the dogs got up ; but as soon as the sportsman's whip touched their legs, they ran to a side, our *breetchka* was upset, and we were thrown into the ditch. Fortunately we were not hurt, but only fell up to our necks in dirt, and could not disentangle ourselves from under the *breetchka*. There we lay, in the predicament of flies under a glass tumbler. A noise and laughing got up around us. Meloveeden fell into a violent passion, and threatened to break the head of the rascal who was the cause of our unlucky mishap. I cursed the hunt and the huntsmen, and Peter Petróveetch was silent. At last the *breetchka* began to move away from over us. The sportsmen shoved it to a side, and we clambered out of the ditch, all wet and dirty like as many craw-fish. A dozen of sportsmen were collected on the road, and one of them, the same who had taken the lead, came up to us, and after smothering his laughter, said : " Forgive us, gentlemen, my hounds are at fault. I would not be Silas Glazdooren, if there were dogs equal to my *Zalet* and *Veentovka* in any part of the empire. That damned fox threw himself among your horses' feet, but *Zalet* and *Veentovka* would snatch the game, though it were in the fangs of a wolf." Peter Petróveetch whispered to Meloveeden not to shew his passion, or abuse the fortunate possessor of *Zalet* and *Veentovka*, while I with wonder gazed on that prodigy. His round red face was covered with copious perspiration and dust. Between his long ruby nose and thick lips, were planted a pair of long red whiskers, like squirrels' tails.—

His dishevelled hair was covered with a small, weather-beaten, green leather cap. He was dressed in a short green stuff *Tchekmen*,* and striped trowsers. A tobacco pipe was in one of his outer pockets, and on his right shoulder from a belt hung his hunting horn, while on his left was a small flask covered with morocco leather. In his left hand he held a whip; his right he extended to Peter Petróveetch, and began again to speak. "Give me your hand, brother, and don't be angry. It is a sad misfortune that you fell into the ditch! But for my part, there is not a ditch or pit for twenty versts round into which I have not tumbled, in chasing hares and foxes. But you, brethren, why do you stare at me like wild beasts?" added he, looking first to me, then to Meloveeden. "Have done with your anger! Is it my fault that you fell into the kennel! If it had depended upon me, I would much rather have soused you in punch. You know, mischief will happen of its own accord!" At these words, Glazdooren, taking a hold of his flask, drank a mouthful of its contents, then loosening it from his shoulder, and handing it to Peter Petróveetch, he said; "Drink, brother, it is famous Anisovka.† It will freshen you up." Peter Petróveetch gave him the flask back, and in the name of us all, replied:—"My good Sir, your carelessness was the cause of our unlucky adventure. As you did not do it intentionally, we willingly excuse you, but beg that in recompense for what we

* The single-breasted surtout worn among the Cossacks.

† An infusion of Anise-seed in spirits.

have suffered from your passion for hunting, you would furnish us with the means of changing our clothes and setting off without delay for the town in your carriage.” “With pleasure, my dearest fellow,” exclaimed Glazdooren: “I will give you my own Moscow calash, and six of my wild Kirgheezian horses. My house is only three versts from this; seat yourselves on the horses of my sportsmen, and we shall be there in a crack. But drink something: aye, aye, it is excellent *anisovka*.” “We drink no spirits,” said Meloveeden. “How, not drink spirits; nonsense!” exclaimed Glazdooren: “Be ashamed of yourselves, you are not young ladies!” We still refused: Glazdooren then proceeded to administer to his companions, presenting to us, one by one, ten head of the neighbouring gentry, calling each of them by his christian name and his patronymic. After that he asked us: “But with whom have I the honour to be acquainted: may I not know the rank, name, and family? yes, and from what quarter of the empire? You appear not to belong to this part of the country.” Peter Petróveetch, fearing lest Meloveeden should in his rage say something unpleasant to Glazdooren, took upon himself to be spokesman. “These gentlemen, (calling us by our family names,) have come to our town upon business of their own, but I have lived there three years, and am astonished that you have neither seen me nor that I have had the honour of seeing you before this time, respectable gentlemen.” “That’s true, but you surely never frequent the tavern kept by Shnaps the German?” asked one of Glazdooren’s friends. “No, but I am

acquainted in many houses," replied Peter Petróveetch. "We do not drive about from house to house in the town," replied Glazdooren. "Our agents manage our business with the lawyers, and we meet with our brotherhood at bear or wolf hunts, and at elections. Yes, drink, my brethren, *anísovka* ; it is really excellent !" On our refusal being repeated, Glazdooren exclaimed : "But wait a while, and I will treat you at home to such cordials as are not to be met with through the whole government. My wife herself makes them. She was brought up at Petersburg, and at first would have fallen into a fit at the smell of spirits and tobacco-smoke, but at length she is so far broken in, that she can almost herself smoke, and from morning to night does nothing but make cordials and bitters for me. But it is time to go home. Here, my lads, rub the mud off these gentlemen with grass. Grey-pawed Pheelka, blear-eyed Senka, and red-headed Meetka, go home on foot. Lavrooshka, you rogue, run into the wood and call the bugles ; shut up the dogs and go home. Let the peasants also go to their homes, and tell them to be all in the field the day after to-morrow, by day-light. You must block up the thicket which is beyond Seedor's field, and let in the dogs. Petrooshka has seen the fresh trail of a wolf, three days running. Give me my horse. Now, gentlemen, I am at your service."

The axle and one of the hind-wheels of our breetchka were broken. The huntsmen spliced it with a spar, and dragged it to the blacksmith's. We rode with Glazdooren on the huntsmen's horses. One of the

guests proposed riding through a field of corn. "What sort of a manager art thou, brother Aneezim Stepan-oveetch?" said Glazdooren. "It is another affair to gallop through corn after a hare: there is no sin in that: but when there is no business, there is nothing to be gained by it. No, we will take the beaten road, and in the meantime, my lads will give you a song. Hey, my boys, let us hear some of your music."

The huntsmen had scarcely finished their song when Glazdooren halted, and we all followed his example. "Sophron, hand here some fresh *anisovka*!" said Glazdooren. One of the huntsmen untied a flask from his saddle, and gave it to his master, who, after taking a draught of spirits, handed it round to his comrades. "Sportsmen must drink," said Glazdooren turning to Meloveeden: "*Vodky* invigorates the strength and freshens the blood." "Quite the contrary; I believe that spirits inflame the blood, and weaken the constitution," returned Meloveeden.—"Nonsense, brother, nonsense," exclaimed Glazdooren. "That is what the German doctor says, but he makes no converts among us. Monsieur * Wasserbrodt never tastes spirits, and is as lean and scraggy as a withered horse: Silas Glazdooren drinks his dram like all sinners, and is as healthy and strong as a three-year-old bear. Don't believe, brother, what these Germans say. They only want to get their wares off their hands, and for that reason, this Monsieur Wasserbrodt wishes to physic me with his decoctions

* *Monsieur* in Russian is frequently applied by way of mock compliment, when speaking of a foreigner, whatever be his nation.

in place of vodka. But Silas Glazdooren is not the man to be humbugged by him. Blow your bugles and *march* at the gallop!"

'Wolves must be fought after their own fashion,' as the saying is. We galloped after them. On coming up to a little village, we met with a meagre flock of sheep returning from the field. The grey-hounds, who were uncoupled, flew upon the sheep, and dispatched two of them upon the spot. The shepherd durst not drive away the ghospodeen's dogs, and the huntsmen stopped to gratify themselves with the spectacle, which put Glazdooren into high glee. "Bravo, *Zalet!* to it, *Vintovka, atoo ávo, átoo ávo!*" cried he with all his strength. When this sheep-bating was over, we proceeded at a slow pace to Glazdooren's own village.

The first object which met our eyes was the drinking-house, beside which there was a crowd of peasants. "You allow a *Kabák* to be kept on your estate?" said Peter Petróveetch. "What a question," exclaimed Glazdooren in amazement. "Don't the vodka-farmers pay for it, and if they do, why should not they be allowed to establish a *Kabák* under my nose if they please!" "Convincing logic," said Peter Petróveetch to me.

The village belonging to Glazdooren formed quite a contrast to that of Mr. Rossiyanéenoff. Here the cabins were half in ruins, the court-yards half fenced in, and the thatching of the houses admitted the light in several places. The street was impassable for the dirt. Miserable half-naked boys on perceiving us ran crying into the *eezbas*, fearing the dogs and the whips. The

peasants were ragged, and had a gloomy repulsive appearance: the women were in tatters, and owing to that, they almost all looked ill. It is true there were some pretty faces which peeped out at the windows, and some good looking girls dressed with tawdry finery, who sallied forth from their gates at our approach, to pay their respects to Glazdooren, who saluted them in a very familiar tone, and shook his fingers at them with a smile. On leaving the village, we saw at a distance the Manor-house. Glazdooren ordered the horns to be blown, and gave the word of command to gallop, and we set off as fast as the animals could carry us. On entering the court-yard through a crazy gate, we halted, while Glazdooren in the buoyancy of his spirits leaped from his horse upon the tottering stair-case, and entered the lobby. A crowd of tatterdemalion servants met us at the door. It would have been difficult to guess what the colour of their livery was, and what metal had been used for the lace which appeared from days of yore to have adorned their rags by way of fringes. Glazdooren had hardly crossed the anti-chamber, when he raised a tremendous noise, and fell a scolding every body because the table was not covered. He threatened the butler with the stable,* kicked about the footman, and saluted his wife with certain contortions of visage which have never yet appeared in print. The house became all alive; men-servants, maid-servants and dogs, bustled about the rooms, the doors slapped, the chairs cracked,

* The place where whippings are usually administered.

and in the midst of this confusion, Glazdooren's voice was distinguishable like that of a shipmaster to his crew in the time of a storm. At last the table was covered, and a late sportsman's dinner was served up. The guests assembled in the hall, and Mrs. Glazdooren, a beautiful young woman, appeared, with her two daughters who were from seven to nine years of age. The landlord did not trouble himself about presenting his wife to us; he only hauled us all to a table on which stood vodky-bottles, and recommended to all his beloved *anísovka*. We introduced ourselves to the lady of the house, and related what occasion had brought us thither, giving her to understand in an indirect manner that we were not amongst the number of her husband's friends, our acquaintance having been accidentally formed on the highway. Scarcely had Mrs. Glazdooren pronounced a few words, when Vertooteen exclaimed: "How, don't you know me, Anna Elvovna?" "Is it you, Peter Petróveetch?" They entered into explanations, and we learned that Peter Petróveetch had been a friend of the lady's father, and had carried her when a child in his arms. The landlady was quite overjoyed at this meeting, and even shed tears at the recollection of her past life, of which Vertooteen had been a witness. Glazdooren, in place of shewing any tenderness or respect, seized upon Peter Petróveetch's arm, and dragging him to the little table, exclaimed: "Here, drink *anísovka*, old friend of my father-in-law!"

When we were requested to sit down to table, all the guests hurried to the end which was occupied

by the landlord, avoiding the neighbourhood of the ladies as an unfavourable position. Though we were not hungry, we sat down at the landlady's end. The table was surrounded by a file of servants, two of them to each cover; they were on the alert only to remove such plates as contained any fragments, and attended to the guests' orders at discretion. The dogs crowded under the table and about the guests, in order to lay hold of any bones that should be thrown to them by the sportsmen. The table was provided with different sorts of cordials, which were strongly recommended by the landlord's praises, and still more strongly by the example which he set for the good of his guests. The conversation was very interesting and warm. Every one praised his own hounds, horses, fowling-pieces, and huntsmen; related curious sporting anecdotes anent hares and foxes; and celebrated victories gained over bears and wolves. Every one bragged of his own skill and prowess, particularly in those dangers which happened in the chase. But Glazdooren, if he did not overcome them all in argument, did so at least in clamour, and came off with flying colours. But, as one of the guests would by no means give in, maintaining that his dog was better than Glazdooren's Zalet, it was resolved that after dinner the cards should determine which person both these famous dogs should in future belong to, and thereby close this controversy for ever.

On rising from table, the guests passed into another large room, into which pipes and coffee were brought. On a sudden the door opened with a bounce, and in

rushed a gang of male and female gipseys, with *balalaikas*, * playing and singing. “Ayee shjghee, ayee shjghee, góvoree !” (Burn, burn, but speak !)—Without waiting for orders, one half of the gipseys fell a dancing, while the other half, forming a circle, began to sing a dancing song with the accompaniment of balalaikas, shouting and whistling. The guests stretched themselves out upon the *divans* † with their pipes, praised the skill of the dancers and the beauty of the girls, while Glazdooren proudly strutted about the performers and bawled, “*Bravo, bravo, bad, excellent, quicker !*” Peter Petróveetch and Meloveeden along with me went into the drawing-room, where the lady of the house sat alone. “Pardon my freedom,” said Veertooteen, “but it is really incomprehensible to me, how you, whose education was more suited for a quiet life, and for a higher scale of society, could tolerate the *corps-de-garde* tone of your guests, and the boisterous life of your husband ?” She blushed, and after a short silence replied : “It is true that my husband is rather noisy, but he is not a bad man, for his way of life is a consequence of his upbringing and of bad examples. While but a child, he was left an orphan under the guardianship of his uncle, who was persuaded that a nobleman wanted no more learning than to be able to sign his name and be a good sportsman ; that not only the earth but even the heavenly luminaries were made for the pleasure

* The Russian guitar.

† A *divan* is a sort of couch made of elastic cushions, not bound together into a wooden frame as in a sofa.

of the noblesse, and that to live means to eat, drink, and be merry. One day the governor being displeased with him when he had been appointed to preside at an election, asked him, in the assembly of noblesse, "Tell me, Frol Timophayeveetch, for what end was a head given to man?" "To wear a hat and get drunk," replied the worthy uncle with a serious air. From that you may judge what education my husband received under the care of such a guardian and tutor. An extraordinary occurrence or, properly speaking, fatality united me with Silas Meeneetch. You know that my father had nothing but his salary to live upon, and that my late mother herself undertook my education. On the death of my parents, I was taken home by a widow-aunt of mine, who loved me with the fondness of a mother. She was but indifferently provided for, and lived after her husband's death in a small village of this district. Her deceased husband was owing my husband's uncle a sum of money which she was never able to pay, and she would have been deprived of her last refuge in her old age, if my husband, to whom the bills fell by inheritance, had chosen to prosecute her. On a visit to my aunt, he fell in love with me, and offered me his hand. I— — — but why should I spin out the explanation—I married him and the bills were cancelled. As I was a peace-offering for my benefactress, I was happy. Besides, my husband loves me, and it is my duty — — — to put up patiently with his little weaknesses. We have all our failings!"

Glazdooren came into the room. "Ashenka!" said

he, "go and fetch out of the commode a couple of thousand roubles. We have been playing at cards, and I have lost a thousand roubles to Travleen, but to make up for that, I have won his famous dog Veekhory. He is quite in despair, and I am resolved to celebrate this achievement. I have now the two finest hounds in the whole of Russia! now, make us, Ashenka, some punch as strong as possible. But you, gentlemen, why are you seated like posts, and why don't you make merry? Can't you make a nice little party for faro?" We thanked the landlord, and begged him to allow us to retire for the night. We had dined very late, and being wearied with the day's adventures, resolved to lie down and sleep, to free ourselves from our landlord's officious hospitality, and escape from being spectators of his noisy merriment. We were shewn into a room in a separate building.

"Glazdooren and his friends are pendulums which check the movements of Russia in her progress towards refinement," said Peter Petróyeetch. "There is one benefit derived from their example. Exactly so as at the public table of Sparta drunken Helots were brought thither as a warning to youth of the folly of that vice, we ought to take a lesson from Glazdooren and his fraternity, to warn people who are not yet metamorphosed into beasts by their everlasting sporting, and whose blood has not yet become a quintessence of alcohol."

The whole night was passed in song, noise, and shouting. When the gipseys were wearied, Glazdooren ordered his own huntsmen to sing, and his own

maid-servants and peasant-girls to dance. He lost that night some thousands of roubles, the carriage in which he had promised to send us to the town, and a team of six horses ; but he was in excellent humour and spirits, on account of his having won Veekhory, and celebrated that achievement with greater éclat than the birth of his first-born son. By sun-rise the house was quiet.

We wished to take our departure, though we should not bid adieu to our landlord ; but our *breetchka* was not ready yet, and we were obliged to wait, against our inclination. About mid-day Glazdooren awoke, and we, in going about the court-yard, met him beside the stable. With a hoarse voice he called us to him, and pulled us *vi et armis* into the stable, where we were obliged to listen to a lecture concerning the properties of each horse, while he kissed and beat with his switch them all in their turns. He then took us into the house to breakfast, where we found all the guests with pale faces and red eyes. With shaking hands they took each a dram of coloured vodky and whet, and the strength of the spirit soon braced their weakened nerves. As it was too late for sporting that day, they proposed to have a little horse-racing till dinner time. The landlord and all his guests (except us three) staked a hundred roubles each, and this sum was to be given to the winner. It was resolved in common council, that whosoever gained the prize should after the race set agoing a faro-bank. In the mean time, our *breetchka* was repaired, and we set off without waiting for dinner, which was not ready

at the appointed time ; owing to the cook having been a performer in the domestic choir, and having moistened his throat with little consideration, he was hardly able to stand on his legs in the morning. On resuming his work of cooking, his head was so muddled that he had put into one pot what should have been put into another ; he spoiled, burned, and bungled the whole mess, and for that was put under arrest into the cow-house, while the housekeeper had to make ready another dinner.

On our return to the town we learned from our landlord, that the man of office who had come from Petersburg, had moved heaven and earth to find some pretence for procuring the *Capitan Eespravnik's* dismissal from the service, a secret complaint having been lodged against him by the steward of a person of distinction. The equitable Michael Ivanoveetch had punished this steward for raising illegal imposts on the peasants under his charge. But the *Capitan Eespravnik's* papers were found all in order. The man of office, on leaving the court, being quite out of humour that he had been unable to make a job of it, asked the crowd of townsmen who were gathered about the door, " Are you satisfied with your magistrates ? " " No," replied the mob ; " The police injures us." " What does it to you ? " " It enforces cleanliness."

The man of office could not help laughing at this complaint against the police. Seeing at last that he could make nothing by accusing the *Capitan Eespravnik*, he, having no alternative, took his side and laid the blame upon the steward ; for necessity required

that in proof of his zeal, he should find out who was to blame ; otherwise there would be no end to the affair. The man of office then suddenly changed his mind, and behaved with extreme politeness to all, even to his own landlord the merchant. The *Capitan Eespravnik's* friends undertook to reimburse him for his travelling expenses, of which he complained in a very moving tone, representing at the same time his income as very insufficient. But all this was kept secret from the *Capitan Eespravnik*, who, if he had known of the intention of his friends, would have probably quarrelled with them, and perhaps come to words with the man of office.

Next morning the *Capitan Eespravnik* called upon us, and brought us our passports and post-order for Moscow, and me my money. We embraced the worthy Shtweekoff, who was on his part extremely glad that the affair had ended prosperously. One thing disturbed me. I had written several times to my aunt without receiving any answer. Melancholy forebodings pressed upon my heart, and it was only in the friendship of the kind Meloveeden that I could find relief. At last, after taking leave of the *Capitan Eespravnik*, Peter Petróveetch, the priest and our landlord, and writing a letter of adieu to the respectable Mr. Rossiyanéenoff, we set off for Moscow with post horses, in a carriage bought by us, while the goods were forwarded by carriers.

CHAPTER III.

Story of the old Soldier—Arrival in Moscow—My aunt's history
—I find my mother—A Seducer—Murderers.

ON the road the most unsocial people become intimate with their servants. I and Meloveeden, besides, considered Petroff more in the light of a fellow sufferer in our common misfortunes than as a servant, and behaved to him with great kindness and affection. "Where were you born, Petroff?" Meloveeden asked him one day.—"In the Polish Ukraine," replied he. "I would never have guessed that you came from that country," replied Meloveeden. "You have the real Great-russian accent." "That is owing, your honour, to my apprenticeship with a wig-maker in Petersburg, and entering the service early." "And so you are one of the *dvoroavey** class?" "Yes Sir." "What was your Pan's name?" "I was a serf of a rich Russian lady who had been long settled in the Ukraine." "How did you come to be a soldier?" "I shall tell you if you wish it." "Tell us then." "My father was one of the house-cossacks?" "What does that mean?" inquired I. "The rich proprietors in the

* The household serfs: *dvoroavey* means literally, of or belonging to the *court-yard*, a station which appears to have been allotted, in days of yore, to the higher as well as the lower order of dependants.

Polish Ukraine are in the practice of clothing some of their *dvoroavy* people in the Cossack costume, and employing them for running errands, making inquisitions, performing executions, &c. Our lady had a troop of fifty cossacks, under the command of my father, who had the title of *Asavool* or Captain. These house-cossacks are accoutred, our old people say, exactly in the same style as were in former times the Malo-russian soldiers, wearing wide Turkish trowsers, a jacket, and a sheepskin cap. The cossacks shave the head and wear a long queue from the crown, which they plait behind the ear: this lock of hair they call *oseledetz*. They also shave their beard, but leave long mustachios. For the house-cossacks, it is generally the most active and handsome youths who are preferred. Notwithstanding that it is prohibited, they sometimes arm them with lances, sabres, pistols, and always with *nagaikas*.* The large estates belonging to my lady were all let out to different small proprietors, while the *kartchmas* and drinking shops in the market-towns were farmed by the Jews. The Ukrainesmen are a good, but obstinate people. The Ukraine peasant does not submit to injuries so patiently as he of Lithuania or Byalo-russia. On my lady's estates, the peasants frequently opposed the despotic government of the farmers and their stewards, and the cossacks had always work and a livelihood, in the pacification of the disobedient, and in *executions*, that is to say free quarters at the expense of the pea-

* A heavy whip with a piece of lead plaited into the end of it.

sants, as a punishment for disobedience. The cossacks had also to dun the Jews for their arrears. If my father had been frugal, he might have acquired for himself a tolerably large capital, as his comrades did, many of whom bought their freedom, and their children having been taught to read and write, call themselves *shlyakhtitches*, when they live at some distance from the place of their birth. I met with many of the companions of my childhood in Petersburg: the greater part of them were employed as solicitors in law matters, and they live like Pans. But unfortunately my father was passionately attached to card-playing, and all that he had wrung in the course of a whole year, he would spend at Kief-fair, which he used to frequent on his mistress's business, being sent as a guard upon the cash-box. My father had five sons. The lady selected me with half a hundred other boys to be sent to Petersburg as apprentices to different trades.

"The steward, who took us to Petersburg, was a friend of my father, and on that account put me to learn a light trade, which would also give me an opportunity of ingratiating myself with my masters and mistresses. In my new master's shop I learned roguery and cheating, of which I had no conception before. My father sent orders to have me taught reading and writing on his own account; but I liked cards better than books, and assisted my comrades to cheat our master, in order to have the means of gambling whole nights running. Five years soon passed away, and I was ordered home. I had to undergo a probation in the presence of my lady, and dress the hair of one of the chambermaids

in the newest fashion. But I knew better how to play at 'the three leaves',* or 'the little eagle,'* than to curl hair and form it into tresses. I burned with the curling tongs the girl's forehead, and spoiled her pretty curls. The lady gave me a brace of cuffs and sent me to the back-yard to wait further orders.

"My lady had not only chests but whole barrels full of silver ; notwithstanding which she never let slip any opportunity of making a kopeek, and did not spend the hundredth part of her immense income.— Although the court-yard was quite full of people, and there also sat at their mistress's table a number of servants who were *shlyakhtiches* or relations, the lady knew how to feed them all at the least possible expence. Provisions in our part of the country are very cheap, and every thing which was required for their mistress's table in the shape of fowls, geese, turkeys, butter, eggs, mushrooms, &c. was furnished by the peasants by way of taxes, but under the name of gifts. The wines, sugar, tea, coffee, and kitchen groceries, were also never bought by our lady : the Jews had to furnish that, when they got any lease of *kartchmas* or drinking shops. Our lady was engaged in nothing but receiving and counting money, chequing accounts, and examining her chests. She took a particular pleasure in receiving eggs from the country women. For this purpose she had a particular measure, a wooden bottomless cup, through which she passed the eggs into a tub

* Games at cards played by the common people.

full of water. If the egg did not fill the measure, the peasant woman had to give another to boot.

“Of the imposts and incomes of different sorts from the property, part of which I do not recollect and part do not know, one was a contrivance of our lady herself, and brought her in a great deal of money. Every peasant's court-yard had to produce once a-year a horse's tail, and every peasant girl had at least once in her life to cut her locks and give them to her lady.—The horses' tails were bought by Russian merchants, but the human hair was sent by a man to Moscow and Petersburg, for sale to the wig-makers, for wigs, necklaces, and false curls. As my mistress knew of no other fault which I possessed but my unskilfulness in fashionable hair-dressing, in a short time I was employed to shear these two-legged sheep and take the hair to the capitals. For some years I performed that office pretty decently, but one day fell in with gamblers and lost three *poods** of the very best hair, among which was a whole *pood* of red which was then in vogue. Not daring to return to my mistress, I skulked about a long time in Petersburg, but at last fell into the hands of the police, as a person without a passport, and was sent to my mistress.

“At that time there was a levy of recruits, and I was sent for a soldier. The service has cured me of my evil propensities, and maturer years have ripened my power of reflection. After serving ten years credit-

* A *pood* is 40lb Russian weight, or 36lb English.

ably, I was promoted to be a non-commissioned officer. Our regiment was stationed on the line of the Caucasus, where, in an action with the mountaineers, I received a severe wound, and was dismissed the service. I thought of going to Moscow, and taking up the trade of a boot-maker, which I had learned in the service. At the Makarieff fair, a Bukharian merchant engaged me in his service, promising me mountains of gold, and on our arrival at Bokhara, sold me as a slave to an Oözbek, or nobleman of that country. I was obliged to work in the fields like a horse in the hottest weather. I was beaten with sticks when fatigue overpowered me, and fed worse than any domestic animal. At last I grew ill from starvation and exhaustion, and my master gave me in exchange for a bullock to another merchant, who, upon my recovery, took me with him for the purpose of driving camels in the Kirghee-zian *steppe*. I had been with several caravans destined for Russia before my change of fate, but the Bukharian merchants leave their Russian prisoners in the *steppe* with their Kirghee-zian acquaintances, and take them back with them on their return to Bokhara.—Owing to this it is very difficult to save one's self by flight, and I would probably have ended my days amongst these infidels, if they had not fortunately quarrelled among themselves, like dogs for a bone, and if his honour, Ivan Ivanoveetch, had not been among the Kirgheez. It is true there are every where good and bad people, and in Bukharia I have seen good masters, while in our country I have seen masters who

are no better than any Oozbek. But death will make all alike, and then the roll-calls and examinations will follow regularly : some will have gold-lace * and some the stocks. He who has gone through all the hardships of a campaign knows the emptiness of the world. On the bivouacs the same quantity of wood which warms a soldier warms a general, and no more ground than a man's length is required for sleeping. Whether it be dry black bread which is in the stomach, or a dainty tart, it is all the same, provided a man have enough ; but when it comes to the parting of the leaden nuts, all have an equal share. The main affair is to have a clear conscience, a healthy constitution—yes, and a passport in your bosom. There is plenty of bread and work in Russia."

At last we saw the steeples of Moscow, and embraced each other in silence. I was, as it were, in a fever ; and when the barrier arose before us, the tears trickled from my eyes. We alighted at a tavern, and, as it was not yet very late, each of us, hiring a droshky, went in search of our friends. Meloveeden burned with impatience to learn what had become of his wife, the Count and Countess Tzeetereen, and his uncle. I went in search of my aunt. At her former lodgings nobody knew whither she had removed, or what had become of her. I also did not find Vorovaateen in his old lodgings. His landlord told me that Vorovaateen, on his return from Orenburg, sold all his effects, and left Moscow nobody knew whither. He advised me to inquire at the

* Trimmings of galloon are assigned as rewards to the Russian soldiers.

police about my aunt. I returned in very low spirits, and found Meloveeden in still lower. The Count and Countess Tzeetereen were dead ; their son, the captain, whom he supposed to be killed, was only severely wounded, had recovered, and succeeded to his parents' property. Of his wife, Meloveeden could get no intelligence, except that she did not return to Moscow. His uncle had at last retired from the service, and ceased to subscribe, "*Faithfully copied from the original,*" and settled in Kief with his housekeeper, who was as much attached to him as a chronic distemper. Her daughter had married one of those husbands who spend their youth in hunting for brides among the elevées of rich people, or the housekeepers of old bachelors. Meloveeden had not a kopeck in the world, nor any hopes of money to come. I made him an offer of my purse, and for the meantime gave him a hundred ducats. That was some consolation to his grief. Next day I went to the head quarters of the police, and found one of the gentlemen in that office who undertook to inquire after my aunt's residence. Orders were sent to all the overseers of police to give notice whether Madam Baritono lived in their district. Reports were sent in from all the police offices, "that, in such a ward, the said Baritono has no residence." Next day, after receiving these reports, a *valet de place*, whom I also employed to seek for my aunt, acquainted me that she lived within twenty paces of the tavern where I lodged, in a house belonging to the police-overseer's wife, and ad-

joining to the very house of the police-inspector, who had drawn up a report for his district, that Madam Baritono did not live there.

I flew to my aunt. Up a dirty stair-case I went into the gallery, or, properly speaking, under the shed of a second floor, and could hardly grope my way to the end of it for barrels, tubs, buckets, and iron and earthen pots. I opened a door which led into a dark kitchen; a tattered old woman looked upon me with astonishment, and made a low obeisance to me. "Does Adelaida Petróvna Baritono live here?" "Here master!" My heart palpitated, my limbs shook: I opened the door into the room. My God! what a spectacle! In a small cell with a single window, on a dirty bed, lay a woman with a swelled face, covered with red spots. An old cloak was thrown over her, and her head was bound up with a handkerchief which had lost its colour. She looked at me with unmoved eyes, raised herself, opened her mouth in order to say something, and was silent. "Is that you, aunt?" exclaimed I, and threw myself about her; but she fell down on her pillow and shut her eyes. A tremor diffused itself over her, a cold sweat came upon her face, and her mouth distorted itself from nervous agitation. I thought she was dying, and in despair did not know what to do. The *valet de place* was with me, waiting in the gallery. I ran to him, ordered him immediately to call a doctor, and returned to assist my aunt. The old cook in the meantime ran to her neighbour the Kvartálny Nádzeeratl's* wife, who came imme-

* Police-Inspector:

diately with a smelling bottle, and by her exertions brought my aunt to her senses. A copious flow of tears ensued, and that relieved her heart. "Vanya," said she at last; "and so you have not forgotten me!" I answered only with my tears. "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast permitted me once more in my life to press to my heart him who is the dearest to me of all in the world," said my aunt. "Good Vanya, you have found me in poverty and disease: I have deserved it, and do not blame Providence. He has been kind to me in restoring me you. I shall now die in peace!"

The worthy neighbours left us, and I, on coming a little to myself, cast my eyes around this receptacle of poverty. The walls of the cell were as black as a smithy. The window was composed of fragments of different sorts of glass, and was in some places patched up with sugar-loaf paper. A fir table, two chairs, and a small chest, formed all the furniture. A lamp burned in a corner before a sacred picture. On the window stood an earthen tea-pot without a lid, a white earthen cup, a tumbler, a pitcher containing drink, and a tallow candle stuck into a bottle. After looking at all the property, I pressed my aunt to my bosom. I do not recollect what I said, but I wept bitterly. At last, being a little quieted, I went to look out for her a fit lodging, leaving with her my pocket-book, with money to pay the doctor and for medicines.

The same evening my aunt was removed into a clean and well furnished suit of rooms, and found in commodes every thing necessary for her immediate wants, besides

a clean bed, cooking utensils, a table-service, silver-plate, and an active maid-servant to wait upon her, a skilful cook, and a clever footman. I remained in the meantime in the tavern with Meloveeden, who participated in my joy, and took the task upon himself of seeking out and furnishing the rooms, as well as buying every thing wanted (of course at my expense,) for my aunt. He was a thorough master of that, having ruined himself several times and set up again.

In a fortnight my aunt recovered from her illness, and the physicians declared that the danger was over. She was even able to go about the room. I did not choose to relate my adventures to her, for fear of doing her harm by bringing on fresh agitation upon her feelings. At last when her strength was recovered, I related to her every thing which had happened to me after my departure from Moscow, and concluded my relation with a request that she would explain to me the cause of the questions and suspicions of Vorovna-teen regarding my father, and the persecution of the unknown Countess. My aunt mused a little, and at last threw herself about my neck and wept. "Vanya," said she, "I wish to lay open to you my soul, in which lies hid the secret of my whole life. Look not down upon me, but pity one who has been unfortunate. I am the victim of thoughtlessness and vanity. Listen!

"You do not perhaps know that in Byalo-russia there are many villages or *Slobóds* which are inhabited by people from different parts of Russia, mostly of the sect of *Old-believers*, who had retired thither when it formed a part of Poland, to escape from persecu-

tion in Russia. There is one Russian *Slobód* about ten versts distant from the estate of Mr. Gologordofsky. In that *Slobód* lived an opulent peasant named Peter Sevastiánoff, surnamed Krutogólov, who, by trading in linen, flax, and bristles, and following the profession of a carrier, had acquired a decent competency. He was a widower, and his sister Axeenya managed his house. He had two children, a daughter Doonya, aged sixteen, and a son Vaséely, nineteen years of age. This Doonya was—myself!”

“How, you, aunt!” exclaimed I in astonishment: “with such an education and such an address! It is hard to believe that— — — And so I belong to a peasant-family,” added I, blushing, and casting down my eyes. “But I am your nephew by a sister, and you say that you had no sister. How can that be?” “Be patient and hear me out,” said my aunt: “and be not ashamed of your origin. We have no choice of our parents; but it depends upon yourself to ennoble your birth. Hear me out patiently to the end of my story, and then say and do what you please.

“In our neighbourhood was quartered a Hussar regiment, of which a squadron lay in our village, which was commanded by Prince Meeloslavsky as captain. He was fresh from the guards, and astonished not only us but even the neighbouring gentry, by the richness of his equipages, the beauty of his horses, and the amount of his expenses. The prince was a handsome youth about twenty-five years of age, affable to all, of an amorous temperament and given to gallantry. He made all the young women of the village

presents of ribbands, beads, and sweetmeats, bowed to them all politely, played at the *Khórovódee*,* treated the peasants to vodka, and paid for all in ready money. He was loved by all in the village, old as well as young. I was the only one to whom he made no presents and never spoke. I was timorous, and the Prince appeared not so free with me alone. Every day he rode or walked past my windows, alighted purposely from his horse, as if it were to arrange something, or stopped apparently to speak with my father, but really to have an opportunity of ogling me. However simple country girls may be, they are not so dull but they can read in the eyes of a lover as if it were in a book, and experience is not wanted before a girl can guess with what intention men gaze at her. I had no doubt but the Prince rode and walked past our house for the sole purpose of seeing me, and if I left the window and hid myself behind the gate, he would turn twenty times beside our house in order only to have a glance at me. But I was quite chagrined that, notwithstanding his affability to others, he never spoke a word to me. To tell the truth, I did not understand then what was the meaning of love, but it put me in good spirits when I looked on the Prince, and I was much out of humour when I did not see him for some days or even for a single morning. I frequently dreamed that I saw him with his fair face and black mustachios, and when it happened in my dream that he kissed me, which I much desired, I was all the following day cheerful and

* Similar to the old Scotch bolster-dance.

contented. In our village there were many handsome and agreeable youths, but all their faces appeared to me intolerable, and I found pleasure only in contemplating two faces, viz. my own in my little looking-glass, and that of the Prince. It was not my little looking-glass alone which told me that I was a beauty. All our young peasants, all the officers and landholders' sons who put up at our house when they chanced to be hunting, repeated to me one and the same thing, and for fifty versts round I was known under the name of "the *pretty peasant girl*."

"My father was very strict and harsh in his behaviour towards me : he was a zealous *old-believer*, and would have turned me out of doors if he had known that I looked on a man who did not belong to his sect. He repeated that to me several times. The prince knew of my father's strictness and his inveterate prejudices, and on that account avoided meeting me, contenting himself with tender looks. About half a year passed on in this way ; the Prince left all his acquaintances, all his employments, and secluded himself in the village, finding no other earthly pleasure but that of seeing me several times in the course of the day, on the street or through the window. My thoughts were also entirely upon the Prince, and his image hovered continually before my eyes day and night. Summer arrived. My father went to the town in the way of business, and I remaining under the inspection of my aunt, asked permission one day to go with my companions to the wood for berries. We separated in the wood, and I, singing a mournful song and thinking of

the Prince, was plucking berries, when, on a sudden, I heard a rustling among the bushes ; I sighed for fear, and wished to run away ; the branches opened, the Prince appeared, and I involuntarily kept my place ! “ My dear Doonya, I love thee ! ” said the Prince on coming up to me. I was silent, stood motionless, but was sensible that my knees shook, and that my cheeks were burning. “ Doonya, I shall die if you will not love me ! ” I still kept silence. “ Yes, look at me, ” said the Prince. I lifted my eyes, looked at him, and was obliged to wipe them with my sleeve, perceiving that they were full of tears. The Prince took me by the hand, seated me beside him on the trunk of a tree, and entered into a conversation with me. The hand which was held by the Prince sent vibrations through all my frame, and my heart beat so strongly that I heard its palpitations, and felt as if I was in a fever. The Prince spoke a long time to me, and caressed me, and at last, when he ventured to kiss me, my eyes lost their power of seeing. I thought I would die on the spot from agitation, and threw myself into the Prince’s arms. - - - -

“ We did not long enjoy our forgetfulness ; days passed on, and with them expired our joy. I soon perceived that nature designed me for a mother, and almost at the same time, the regiment received orders to march against the Turks. Where was I to hide my shame ? How escape my father’s strictness ?

“ In one day, without warning, the whole village learned with astonishment that the pretty Doonya had disappeared from her father’s house. I behaved my-

self so cautiously, that no one suspected me of voluntary flight. The news were also spread, as if I had been carried away by force and murdered. Suspicions fell on the Prince, and on many of the neighbouring landholders. My father did not search for me, and other people talked about it for a while, and then dropped it.

“ Fifty versts from our village, in a secluded place in the middle of a wood, was a *kartchma*. In the neighbouring town, the Jew who kept that *kartchma* was recommended to the Prince, as an honest, discreet, and serviceable man, who might be depended upon for every thing. The Prince deposited me there, appointing to take care of me an old woman who called herself a mid-wife; gave me a casket of jewels belonging to him, and amongst them two miniatures of himself which you have seen with me, and ten thousand roubles in bank-notes. The Prince ordered me, as soon as I should recover after my lying in, to proceed with the child to Moscow and wait his return, leaving me his address in the parish of John the fore-runner, in the Kretchetneekee.*

“ The prince went to join his regiment, promising solemnly to provide for my future happiness, and forbidding me to forsake the child. On parting from the Prince, I thought I should part with life itself.

“ I had a room for myself in a retired part of the house. The woman appointed to take care of me had a closet adjoining. The whole of the Jew's fa-

* A street in Moscow.

mily paid me the greatest attention. The landlord himself passed for a doctor, and practised among the small country-gentry of the neighbourhood. At last I brought a son into the world— — — Vanya! You are my son, and Prince Meeloslavsky's!"

I started from my chair.— "How! You my mother!" exclaimed I, with strong agitation of feelings. My mother sat without moving, and covering her face with her hands, wept. I threw myself into her arms, and we mingled our tears together.

"My son," said my mother, "load me not with curses, spurn me not. I followed a natural propensity, and all the fault lies on him who, by the strength of his mind and command over his temper, might have kept me from transgression. But he is no longer in the land of the living — — — let us respect his memory. His head was to blame, but not his heart!" When we grew a little more composed, my mother continued her history.

"Thou knowest that thou wast born with a growth on thy left arm, which was cauterized by my landlord the jew-doctor. In other respects thou wast healthy and strong. I had already begun to recover from my illness, and intended soon to set off for Moscow; but a frightful proceeding separated me from thee.

"The midwife who had charge of me, notwithstanding her attention and kindness, had something in her appearance which I could not bear. Her countenance which was covered with wrinkles, had a strong expression of malice and envy. Every time that our eyes met, I trembled all over; I endeavoured to avoid

her presence, and spent my time alone in my room with thee or with thy father's miniature. One autumn evening I was troubled with a headache and went early to bed ; but feeling an intolerable heat about me, I rose up and went into the fresh air. Standing with my back to the wall, not far from the window of the landlord's room, I heard my name pronounced. I went nearer the window and overheard a conversation which almost deprived me of my senses.

" I have examined the creature's chest," said the midwife, "and found in it unspeakable riches. Whole bunches of white-notes,* whole handfuls of gold-rings and precious stones !" " Well, canst thou not take them and run away, and we shall conceal thee," said the Jew. " I can't," replied the old woman. I have in the town a family, children, and grand children. The creature will find some one to write to the Prince, and he is a friend of the Marshal, of the Gorodneetchy, (the Mayor,) and even of the Governor : it will then be a bad job for me !" " Well, but canst thou not get rid of the girl," said the Jew. " That would be the best of all," replied the old woman. " Here all is empty and quiet. If we dispatch the girl to the other world, and throw her child any where, we can help ourselves to the money and things, and the ends are in the water. Even let the Prince come, we can say that she set off for Moscow ; let him seek her where he can find her. The dead tell no tales !"

* The Russian assignats are of different colours, but those for large sums are white.

"Excellent, excellent, Vaseeleesa!" said the Jew, "but when shall we fall to work?" "Why should we delay?" replied the old woman. "She is unwell to-day and is now asleep; take you the axe, give her a knock on the head, then bag the body and into the lake with it." "Thou art right; why should we put it off? Go then to her door, and I shall bring the axe and immediately dispatch her."

"You may easily imagine in what a state of mind I was, when I heard this hellish consultation. Quite beside myself, I ran with all my might to the wood, and notwithstanding the cold, wet weather, in the darkness of the night, succeeded in hiding myself among the bushes. Quite exhausted, I lay down under a tree and came a little to myself. I reproached myself for having left thee in the hands of the murderers; but after some consideration, my spirits were calmed. I was almost persuaded that they would not venture to murder thee, when they saw that I had escaped their toils. I resolved to go to the government-town, to reveal all to the Governor, who, as I had heard, was a friend of the Prince, and beg him to cause my son to be restored to me, and forward me to Moscow. I had on a large handkerchief about my head and a short-sleeved jacket. After praying to God Almighty, I fell asleep under a tree."

CHAPTER IV.

Conclusion of the history of Adelaida Petróna.—Marriage.—
Education remodelled.—Free life.—Ruinous consequences of
thoughtlessness.—I enter the world.—Visiting.

“ AT day break I awoke from cold, and continued to go through the wood without finding any road. I was tormented with thirst ; but the strong nervous agitation put a period to my illness. After drinking some rain-water out of a bog, I felt myself stronger and more courageous than before. But recollecting that thou wast left without a nurse, I wept bitterly, and committed thee to the care of Him who cares for the unfledged birds and the unfortunate orphans. With some occasional intervals of repose, I continued my journey as far as my strength would permit me, and by mid-day had reached the main road. Fearing pursuit, I did not dare to go along the open road, but went under cover of the wood. On a sudden I heard the tinkling of a bell. I looked through the bushes, and perceiving that in a *breetchka*, drawn by four horses, there sat a gentleman with his footman, I ran towards the road, fell upon my knees, and clasping my hands, cried out : “ Save, save an unfortunate creature from death ! ” The *breetchka* stopped ; the gentleman alighted, came up to me, and proceeded to question me. I related to him all my story, and

prostrating myself at his feet, entreated his assistance and protection. The gentleman was touched with my youth and misfortune ; he seated me beside himself in the carriage, and we proceeded to the town.

“ My deliverer was a native of Italy, and his name, Baritono. He had been a teacher of music and *kapelmeister* in the house of a rich landholder ; and after a stay of six years in the country, was returning to Moscow with a small capital, in order to resume his former employment of giving lessons. Baritono was an elderly man, upwards of forty, but of an agreeable exterior and cheerful temper. He spoke Russian pretty well, and did all he could to comfort me. On arriving at the government-town, he called upon the Governor, and related to him my adventures. The Governor was a worthy and just man ; he wished to see me personally, and was also, like Baritono, captivated with my appearance, and touched with my misfortune. He immediately dispatched an officer to take into custody the Jew and midwife, and to procure immediately my son and all my property. But probably owing to the indiscretion of the postillion in whose hearing I had related my adventure to Baritono, the Jew had got notice of my deliverance. The officer found the *kartchma* evacuated. The Jew’s family and the midwife had disappeared with thee and all the property ; and I heard no more of thee !

“ Baritono took me with him to Moscow, and behaved towards me as an affectionate father to his daughter. He wrote a letter to the army, to Prince Meeloslavsky ; but in place of an answer, we received

the letter back, with the news that the Prince had fallen in battle. Baritono did not wish to part with me. He called me Adelaida, hired teachers for me, and undertook himself to teach me music. In the course of five years I learned to read and write my mother-tongue, acquired a knowledge of French and Italian, and could dance, sing, and play on the piano-forte. Nature is so liberal to the Russian people, that it did not require great exertions to educate me. I loved reading, and grew soon acquainted with all which an accomplished woman requires to know. Baritono was proud of what he had done, and all his friends were astonished at my address, comprehension, and talents. I had many adorers, but gratitude attached me to my deliverer. He made me an offer of his hand, and I cheerfully consented to be his wife, that I might, by my gratitude, recompense my benefactor in some degree for all his cares over me.

“Baritono was a worthy man, and loved me tenderly. I could not be in love with him, but was attached to him, and fulfilled all the duties of a wife with the greatest devotion. In the mean time my husband, wearied of running about the town for tickets, and of quarrelling with his pupils and their parents about the payment of his fees, and also feeling that his health was declining, thought of opening a magazine for Nuremberg goods,* and giving up teaching. He expended all his small capital in furnishing his shop and purchasing goods; but as he had no credit, being a novice

* Toys and trinkets.

in trade, and as he was not up to all the turnings and windings of his new calling, our trade soon died a natural death. Baritono was so vexed at this, that he was taken ill of a fever, and died also.

“ My condition was now any thing but pleasant. I was left with a thousand roubles saved out of all his capital, without any hopes in the future, without a friend and without a protector. The circle of my female acquaintance was confined to some foreigners, shopkeepers, and actresses. Of the gentlemen I knew none, except some musicians and countrymen of my husband. But I was known by all the lovers of the fair sex, who pursued me in crowds on the promenades, withdrew not an eye from my box in the theatre, and were continually passing before my windows. I had a multitude of unknown adorers. Some of them even in my husband's lifetime sent me letters, all of which I delivered unopened to my husband ; others employed women of their acquaintance as love-brokers, but at the first word I silenced these officious friends, and in that way justly passed for a modest woman, which is a rare occurrence under similar circumstances. After Baritono's death, my female friends and the friends of my husband advised me, or, properly speaking, insisted that I should avail myself of a benefit which was offered by generous people who were burning with love towards me. Not seeing any thing better within my reach, and after listening to anecdotes of illustrious families, who nevertheless enjoyed considerable reputation in the world, I thought it was reconcileable with the fitness of things, and agreed

to accept the offer of Prince Tchvanoff, who did not ask me for love, but only for permission to love me, and for that, so to say, gave me my weight in gold. You knew that good old man. He spent all his income on the sex, from mere vain glory to pass for a man of gallantry ! Amidst all his weaknesses and singularities he had a good heart, and if he had been alive, I would not have been reduced to the extremities in which you found me.

“ Knowing neither the value of money nor the want of it, I spent all that came into my hands. On receiving money, I considered it my duty immediately to spend it, and knew of no other expences except those necessary for dress and show. By the elegance of my dress I thought to hide the secret of my conduct ; and the respect which was shewn to the splendour of my dress and equipage, consoled me for the petty disgusts which I experienced in public assemblies from the proud looks of married women, who, protected by their husband’s name, like a screen, find fault with others for what they secretly do themselves.

“ Having no acquaintances amongst whom I might spend my time, I formed a male circle of acquaintance among the most agreeable and amiable people of the metropolis. You have been present at our musical *soirées*, Vanya ; therefore I need not describe them. Being still young, I could not confine myself to the half-platonic love of Prince Tchvanoff, and consequently, at first, for amusement, and afterwards from habit, I sought attachments of the heart. Semen Semenovetch Plaiseereen promised to marry me as soon

as Prince Tchvanoff fulfilled his engagements and bettered his condition. But Prince Tchvanoff's own affairs were far from prosperous ; a part of his property was pledged, and the rest contested at law, so that notwithstanding his good wishes, he had it not in his own power to carry them into effect. Semen Semenovetch introduced to me Grabeelen, that rich old lawyer, who, by his rudeness and pretensions, made my life intolerable. After your departure for Orenburg, I resolutely declined his friendship, and intended to marry a poor industrious painter who was desperately in love with me, when, on a sudden, a violent illness obliged me to keep my bed. I was attacked with the natural small-pox, and so violently, that my whole body was covered with scurf. I grew delirious and lost my senses, of which opportunity the hard-hearted lawyer, Grabeelen, availed himself to deprive me of what remained of my property. Semen Semenovetch, one of those subalterns who are always in quest of females connected one way or other with people of rank and wealth, in order to obtain their patronage—Semen Semenovetch was the first to leave me in my poverty. Another friend, the Abbé Pretatout, also cut my acquaintance, and I would have died without any assistance, if a Russian lady, who had formerly taken offence at me because her husband frequented my *soirees*, had not had pity upon me. The landlord of the house would not allow me to remain without paying my rent ; so I was taken during my illness into that room where you saw me, and thrown upon the mercy of providence. The lady already mentioned,

learning my condition, sent me some money and her own doctor, and hired a woman to take care of me ; but being far from rich herself, she could not do much for me. In the midst of this misery it pleased Almighty God to send me assistance and consolation in the person of thee, my son ! I have for ever lost my beauty, and with it my vanity and thoughtlessness, which were the causes of my errors. I shall now turn into the road of repentance, and by love to God and love to my son, fill the emptiness of my heart. Vanya, my son, nothing can be more unfortunate than a woman who has regarded beauty as her only value, and availed herself of it like merchandise, for the purpose of momentary gratifications. I now feel that in full measure. What would I have been at present, if God had not sent thee to me ?" My mother, after finishing her story, threw herself upon her knees before the sacred picture, and prayed in tears. The prayers lightened her heart, and she grew easier.

"My dear mother," said I, "let us forget the past, and confine our thoughts to the present and future. In your narrative I have not found the key to the secret of my persecution. I have harmed no one : now, who can that countess be, who so ardently desires my destruction ? Had you no female adversary ?" "Many women of rank have been irritated at me," replied my mother ; "but I do not think that any of them would have chosen to revenge themselves upon me by the destruction of my nephew. The secret of your birth is known to me alone. Not one of my former enemies could have the least idea that you were

my son. Indeed I cannot make out the cause of this countess's enmity against thee. May it not be a mistake."

In two months' time my mother was completely recovered ; but her beauty had departed for ever. Her face was covered with deep pits and furrows ; her hair in some places had grown grey ; her eyes had no longer the liveliness of former days, and her well-turned figure had lost its elasticity. My mother looked ten years older than she actually was. The loss of her external charms led her into the road to wisdom. She became pious, and dressed in black from top to toe, spending her whole time in church, and in the reading of godly books.

In the meantime my merchandise arrived in Moscow, and I immediately sold it. I realized about forty thousand roubles ready money, and hired a small but neat lodging, divided into two halves : in one half lived my mother, and in the other myself with Meloveeden : Petroff remained with me in the capacity of valet. We passed our time very modestly—Meloveeden continually writing letters to all corners of Russia, in order to learn the fate of his wife of whom he had hitherto got no account ; I, searching for Vorovaateen, in hopes of finding out the name of my enemy the countess. We walked about and read together, philosophized, and formed plans for the future, and, to speak the truth, wearied ; Meloveeden having been accustomed to the dissipation of high life, while my soul required activity. Some friends recognized Meloveeden and found out his place of residence : on further

consideration, seeing him decently dressed and spending money at the taverns and coffee-houses, they began to call upon us. Speaking about former connexions and the great world, excited in Meloveeden a fresh itching to return to his former circle of acquaintance.

"I say, Vejeeghen," said Meloveeden one day to me ; "you wish to enter the service in order to obtain some standing in the world. It is laudable ! In this country a man *comme il faut*, without a rank, is almost the same as in other countries without a passport. But it is difficult to get any thing of this sort without patronage. Where the men have the power, the women exercise it ; and where the women have the power, the men exercise it. You must seek it amongst the ladies, my dear friend. For entering into the world you have two important qualifications—money and an agreeable exterior. You have more knowledge than is wanted in the great world. The French language and dancing is quite enough for that purpose ; but besides that, you are a musician and play games of skill well. All these qualities united form the highest pitch of wisdom among people of that distinguished circle, to whom they open a road to the first dignities in the empire. You only want that address, that self-confidence, which is attained by frequenting the higher circles of society : but these qualities you may soon pick up, with such a mind and spirit as yours. You will do well if you attend to what I say, and make your entry into the world. I shall introduce you to one or two dozens of my aunts and cousins, and to some full-weight law-givers of first-rate society : with the youth you will

find no trouble in getting acquainted. Say aye to every thing which the old men say, play whist and boston with the old women ; never fall into a passion at cards, and do not ask payment for debts of honour ; give treats to the young people, and participate in their pleasures ; never enter into a dispute, but agree always with the majority in the company of your comrades, with the landlord in his own house, and with every individual by himself. Originate no scandal yourself, and defame no one, but hear it all patiently, repeat it with circumspection, always omitting the names ; amuse the company with fictions, and never tell the truth when you can avoid it ; praise every thing belonging to others, and cry down every thing of your own ; call all babblers sensible, all men in public stations active and industrious, all judges honourable, all rich men beneficent, all elderly ladies good, all young women and girls beauties, all children cupids and geniuses. Get a thorough knowledge of the name's-days, and birth-days of all the people of your acquaintance, and do not neglect visiting. Learn to laugh till you cry, when you are told any wearisome story on pretence of its being funny, and learn to make wry faces when any one confides his grief to you. When you move forward, make it appear as if you always stood back, and that you are doing it in spite of yourself. Ascribe all your success to others, and thank every body. Bear patiently small mortifications, but take your revenge by means of a third party. Make your requests always for others, and get others to request for you.

Never refuse any thing to any one: promise every thing to all, and afterwards make your excuse by the impossibility of getting it performed, seeming at the same time as if you did every thing which depended upon you, though you actually did nothing.

“Recollect these instructions of mine, and believe, that if you follow them implicitly, you will excel all the courtiers in the world, and your wishes will be crowned with success !”

I revealed to my friend Meloveeden the secret of my birth. My heart wanted to be relieved of its burden by sharing it with a confidential friend. We took counsel with my mother, and she blessed me again on entering a new career. “You will meet perhaps with your own relations in the world,” said Meloveeden: “but as you have no proof of your being the son of Prince Meeloslavsky, and as your father left you nothing, that can be of no service to you, and may be even against you; I shall introduce you into the world under the name of a Russian gentleman holding property under a patent in the Byalo-russian provinces. The Russian families in general who have settled in the newly acquired provinces, have few connections in the two metropolitan cities; they will take it upon trust. Even those who regard you as the nephew of Adelaida Petrovna, and have seen you in her house, know nothing of your or of her origin. They doubtless know that Adelaida Petrovna lives now in a solitary condition, and that you maintain her at your own expense. That will confirm them still more in the belief of your assumed rank. Besides,

my dear friend, it is only in the lower classes of the community that people are inquisitive and curious with respect to others. In the higher classes every one thinks of himself, and does not trouble himself about another, if he does not stand in his way."

At last the day came that was appointed for visiting. I hired a carriage with four horses, dressed a footman in livery with gold lace, and set out. On the way, Meloveeden said to me: "We shall begin with the countess Protroobeen. She is the prima donna among the Moscow old women, and half a hundred screamers follow her notes. You must observe that this choir have power given them over the reputation of young people in general, but particularly those in the married state. Here is her house: do you see what a display of carriages stands before the door? It is not so dangerous to offend the government itself as these harpies, who are ready, for the smallest neglect, to tear in pieces the good character of any decent man."

"She receives!" said the Swiss who was busy mending boots in his little closet. We entered into a hall which had been painted half a century before. Around the walls stood huge chairs, covered with slips of bunting, and in the corner a large Dutch clock with a carved oaken case. "Pozyálweetay," ("please,")* bawled the valet, opening the folding-doors into the drawing-room. We entered. The countess, a woman advanced in years, sat bent together on a sofa, sup-

* 'To enter,' understood.

ported by pillows embroidered by her nieces and *elevées*. Under her feet was also a large embroidered pillow. On her knees rested a lap-dog, which peeped out from under her shawl. On a small table before her lay china-cups with visiting cards, a snuff-box, and a hand-bell. In a semi-circle of arm-chairs sat a number of ladies and gentlemen. "How do you do, aunt?" said Meloveeden, kissing her hand—"From whence, master?" asked the countess, raising her head, and looking stedfastly at Meloveeden. "From distant countries, aunt, and I thought it my first duty to call upon you." "Thank'ye, that you have not forgot." "Allow me, aunt, to recommend to your patronage a friend of mine, a Byalo-russian landed proprietor, Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen, to whom I am under great obligations." The countess looked at me, and nodded her head, which I acknowledged with a bow. "I am happy to see you; always glad to see worthy people. I beg you will be seated. Are you alone in Moscow, or with your wife?" asked the countess, pointing to Meloveeden. "Alone, aunt. My wife remained abroad on account of the weakness of her health." "So much the better that you are alone. But where do you serve?" said the countess, turning to me. "I am only now thinking of entering the service," replied I; "I have been studying the sciences till the present time." "Ah, you are one of the literati then: I understand you," added the countess, taking a pinch of snuff. "But how many souls have you," asked she. Meloveeden did not give me time to answer, but said, "Fifteen

hundred." "And how many children have your parents?" asked the countess. "He is the only one, and his own master," replied Meloveeden. "That is not bad," muttered the countess, and took another pinch of snuff. I looked at the other visitors, and observed that the mothers whispered to their daughters, that the daughters put themselves into a more erect posture, raised their eyes, cast side-glances, leaned the head with a graceful air on the shoulders, and those who had good teeth, smiled.

"Fifteen hundred souls for a single man is pretty tolerable," said the countess to herself, rubbing her snuff-box. "What is his surname? pardon the question." "Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen," repeated Meloveeden with a loud and drawling voice. I again noticed that all the visitors moved their lips, as if it were to repeat my name to their memory. "I dine every day at home," said the countess, "and except two days in the week and any extraordinary occasions, I receive visitors every evening. It will be agreeable to me to see you at my house, Ivan Ivanoveetch. I have no occasion to give a fresh invitation to you, Alexander: you must be domesticated with me till you again break loose. Meloveeden again kissed the countess's hand, and I broke out with such a well-turned compliment, that the countess even nodded her head in token of approbation, and took another pinch of snuff as a mark of her satisfaction. "The business is finished," whispered Meloveeden to me: "they will all sing now in the same note. And so it actually happened." "Alexander Ivanoveetch!" said

to Meloveeden a fat elderly woman, highly rouged, and wearing an immense cap which almost covered her eye-brows ; " Is it long since you dismounted from your high horse, that you do not know your old acquaintances ? " " Have mercy upon me, Ma'am," replied Meloveeden : " I bowed to you, and being engaged in conversation with her highness, had not time to turn towards you, to testify my respect, intending besides to have that pleasure in your own house." " Very well," added the fat woman : " I beg you will not forsake us as you did formerly, but favour us with a visit, along with your friend." I fired off another compliment, and the fat woman made a grimace, which probably some flatterer would have called a friendly smile. Meloveeden knew all the guests. Introductions began, and we were invited during this first visit to dine every day and spend every evening with them all. In half an hour I made eleven acquaintances.

" There are many changes since you left Moscow," said the countess to Meloveeden. " Your cousin Ashenka has married a rich man in a public situation. Cousin Poleen has parted with her husband, who lost his place of custom-house director. Cousin Kate was upon the brink of matrimony with a colonel : every thing was already arranged, when the confounded slanderous tongue of Kookooshkeen broke up the affair, and she palmed upon the young man her own precious niece, who has no earthly good quality but her money. But you know that a well-educated man *comme il faut* does not marry for money," added she, casting a look

at me. "Is n't it true, Ivan Ivanoveetch?" "Pecuniary calculation in matrimony is a property of low minds," said I. "How wise!" exclaimed the fat lady, looking to her daughters. "Sensible and clever," apostrophized a thin lady, beside whom sat four stout girls. "You all said that my grandson, Koko, would not be a bungler," said the countess to Meloveeden: "but we gave him a handsome launch into the world. He is upon particular duty under Prince Svazeen in Petersburg, and is already a *Titular*, and this year received a cross in consequence of a journey to Moscow with some Secretary or Procureur on an investigation. It was a pity that he did not come here till the end of the investigation, otherwise he might have got something more. We reserve him for a *Kammer-Yunker*. Prince Svazeen is now in power, and he is *his* man. Some of these days I intend to send him my grandson Jaques, son of the unfortunate Blagoródoff, who it is said went out of his reason, settled in the country, and refused promotion. Jaques, thank God, is not like his father. He is a fine young fellow, and wishes to serve in the foreign college, and knows his business. On my name's-day he composed two sheets of French couplets which were sung by three of my grand-daughters. At last ball he astonished us all at a mazourka, and besides that, he is a prodigy of learning; as they say, he knows orthography and mythology: he will be a man yet! But of his aunt, the countess Nicodem, they speak very ill. I do not like to repeat bad news, but they say that she has connexions - - - - you understand? She has given

up visiting me. God be with her ! Yes, and the ex-governor, your relation Dobrodyéloff, has also ceased visiting here. Notwithstanding his friends cry up his integrity—it is not all who believe it. I have a pretty shrewd guess, that, when people give up calling upon me, they are sensible all is not right with them. I do not like to tell tales, but I know what I know !” The countess took a pinch of snuff, and continued to dilate upon the merits of all her relations and acquaintances ; but Meloveeden availed himself of a momentary pause, rose, and we left the room.

“ May the Lord preserve us from this woman’s tongue,” said Meloveeden, on taking his seat in the carriage : “ she has assumed power over the fourth part of the community of Moscow, and all who only keep at a distance from her and do not bow the knee before her, she tries by martial law as deserters, hands over to her court of cronies, passes sentence upon them, and punishes by deprivation of their good name. By her tongue and connexions she has made herself terrible to many people who occupy important situations, and they must comply with her wishes in order to escape slander and all sorts of underhand attacks. You must flatter her, and she will procure you a situation. The fifteen hundred souls and Byalo-russian nobility, with which I have presented you, will tell.”

We stopped before a large house, and Meloveeden said : “ I will now introduce you to one of the leaders of the *old men* of Moscow, whose name is pronounced with as great reverence as that of the Delphic oracle in days of yore. Antippus Yermoláyeveetch for-

merly held an important situation, and, although events took the same course then as now and always, he is persuaded that from the time that he retired from the service, the sun shines more dimly on Russia, that the moon is not so clear, and that the country is on the brink of destruction. Every thing done both in and out of the empire he condemns, and says that he could have done it better, although unluckily he never did any thing well in his life, except resigning. According to him, except himself and his contemporaries, his friends and patrons, there have been no men of abilities in Russia. If he did not give dinners and balls no body would mind what he said ; but as he congregates so many people about him, as the phrase is, he has his weight. He may be of use to you."

We were admitted. Antippus Yermoláyeveetch was in his cabinet. He was seated in a large arm-chair, in a green velvet morning-gown, trimmed with sable, and ornamented with two stars. " Ah, my old friend, where are you come from ?" said he to Meloveeden. " I have been travelling, and, on my return to Moscow, deemed it my first duty to wait upon your Excellency." " Thank'ye, thank'ye, my good friend !" " Allow me to introduce to you my friend Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen, a Russian nobleman who has an estate with fifteen hundred souls in Byalorussia." " A pretty god-send. But where did your father serve, and what rank did he hold ?" " Colonel in the army," replied Meloveeden. " Was it in the glorious reign ?" " It was," said I, nodding assent. " Aye, then were times ; isn't it true ?" " True,

your Excellency," said we unanimously. "But where do you serve?" "I only wish at present to enter the service." "What is it now-a-days!" exclaimed Antippus Yermoláyeveetch. "The government-offices are now filled with such a set, that a decent man can hardly breathe amongst them." "Is'nt it true?" "True, your Excellency:" said Meloveeden, and I chanted after him the same response. "But even now there are situations of a peculiar nature," added Meloveeden. "Yes, there is something in that; but what is the merit of these peculiar duties! Is'nt it true?" said Antippus Yermoláyeveetch. "Are there the same grandees now, that there were then?—Is'nt it true? It used to be, if you call upon a grandee, he is stretched out in his *khalaat* on a *divan*; there he turns himself, and before him stands a string of Princes, Counts, and Generals, waiting the signal from him whether to laugh or cry. Is'nt it true? But now the grandee himself dares not sit when others are not seated; he receives even petitioners in uniform, and calls his inferior always *you*, or by his Christian name and patronymic. Is'nt it true? Now, what sort of times are these? can any good come of that? Is'nt it true? Formerly a grandee abused you worse than his own footman, and sometimes gave you a shove and threw the papers in your face; but where there was passion, kindness would follow. Is'nt it true? You cannot conceive to what a pitch the depravity of manners has come now. I was telling my nephew an anecdote how a grandee in my time rewarded his secretary on one occasion with a couple of hundred souls of peasants. A recommendation which

he had presented in his favour, was not attended to at head-quarters, and the grandee made his secretary a present of a couple of hundred souls of his own. What d'ye think was my nephew's opinion of this pretty action? Why, he replied, that, 'if he had been in the secretary's place, he would not have accepted of the two hundred souls; because,' says he, 'he was the emperor's servant and not the grandee's, and he had no right to receive a reward from anybody but the emperor.' You see what airs people put on now-a-days. But who d'ye think this secretary was?—my own self. Ah! those were the times, nice little times! Is'nt it true? People now are all for politeness, but what is the use of that? It runs over the mustachios, but takes good care not to enter the mouth. When I served in an inferior rank, I sometimes wanted leave of absence. I gave in, one day, a petition to that effect, and waited upon my superior officer for a gracious answer, at a time when he was engaged with a number of visitors. Do you know what reception he gave me? "Thou fool, Anteep Yermoláyeveetch, blockhead," says he—"I hear, your Excellency!" says I. He repeats—"Thou fool, Anteep Yermoláyeveetch, ass, blockhead." "I am to blame, your Excellency," says I, with a low bow. "Thou askest leave for two months." "Exactly so," your Excellency. "Why hast thou not asked thy salary for two months likewise," added my commander. "Thou art a fool, brother, but here is thy furlough, and here is also an order on the paymaster for thy salary." I kissed my worthy commander's hand, and left the room with a bow, blessing my benefactor. But now they come in

with ‘*bon jour*,’ and they go out with ‘*bon jour*.’ Is’nt it true? What do you think my nephew says about that? Why, he says: ‘Better give nothing, and treat your inferior like a man, but not like a horse.’ That is the way now-a-days. Is’nt it true?” “As we cannot get back the golden age,” said I, “we must even put up with things as they are; and I beg your Excellency will take me under your patronage.” “We shall see about it, we shall see about it. People who were once clerks with me, now fill important situations. What is the good of that? However we shall see about it. I shall see and talk about it. But now, you know, there is what they call a *style* in vogue. They require chancery-papers to be written in harmony like songs, and besides, to be short and clear and business-like. Is’nt it true? Now all this is impossible. Is’nt it true? What the deuce can a man make of those little slips of paper? It was another affair when they could throw you off two or three thousand sheets about the stealing of a fowl or the breaking of a pane of glass, so that you would break your head sooner than come to a conclusion! A pretty thing to wade through business in spite of yourself. Is’nt it true?” - - - - He was here interrupted by one of his footmen announcing the arrival of the police-overseer, who begged permission to wait upon him. “Tell him to come in!” - - - - “I am now-a-days out of place as an incapable man! Do you understand me? Nevertheless, nothing occurs but people of sense come to me for advice. Here the police has ordered my neighbour’s railing to be painted. So they

all come to me for advice what colour to put on. Anteep Yermoláyeveetch is an incapable man, forsooth ! Is'nt it true ?”

We made our bows and retired, receiving permission to come every day to dinner and in the evening. “Silly old creature !” said I to Meloveeden, when we got into the carriage : “he is like an alarum clock, which rings the hour where the index stops.” “The Lord have mercy upon you, if you say to any body in Moscow that Anteep Yermoláyeveetch is a silly creature. They will note you down for a *Raskólnik* * or freethinker. Be silent and listen. These old men have it in their power to do you a great deal of good and a great deal of harm.” “Very well : I think we have had enough of them to day.” “One more visit and we shall have done ; but this will be more to your taste. I shall take you to a dear cousin of mine, whom the whole of Moscow is in love with, and she deserves it too.”

“*Ah, mon cher Alexandre !*” “*Ah, ma cousine Annette !*” They embraced and kissed, and Meloveeden seating himself on a sofa beside the lady, they began to whisper to one another, and kept it up till it seemed that they had forgotten me. At last the lady recollected herself. “*Ah, pardon !*” “My dear Aneta,” said Meloveeden, “I recommend to your particular favour and patronage, my friend, benefactor, deliverer, and what not, Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejee-ghen, who, besides his outward recommendations

* One of the names of the Russian non-conformists.

which you see, is as wise and good as you or I, and has fifteen hundred souls." "*Charmée.*" "A truce to ceremony, if you please," returned Meloveeden. "Recollect that he is a second edition of myself. Observe; what I want is to get my friend placed in the service, and introduced into the best Moscow society. You have an extensive party of your own, cousin. Have the goodness to raise your voice in his favour for a week or so. You may confidently assure every body, that he is just such a man as myself, and you was once persuaded, you know, that I was an angel of a man." "Thou art still the same weathercock as thou always wast," said she. "Where is your husband?" asked Meloveeden. "Quite taken up, travelling about on the affairs of his contracts and *zavóds*;* he is now in Petersburg. I ought to attend to his business here—and confess that is what I cannot bear." "Along with my friend, we shall endeavour to console the fair Ariadne," said Meloveeden, kissing cousin Aneta's hand. "But do not expect me to turn you into a heavenly constellation: no! yet you are too good for earth." "*Toujours volage et aimable,*" said she. "Meantime, good-bye, my dear," said Meloveeden. "We have been so wearied out with two heavy visits which we paid amongst your Moscow centres of gravity, that we must hurry home. *A revoir!*" She also invited us to dine every day and spend the evening.

* *Zavod* has no corresponding term in English, except perhaps the word *works*, used in its technical signification to denote indiscriminately manufactories, founderies, distilleries, &c.

CHAPTER V.

Chart of the great world—Meeting with a dear enemy—Oh human weakness !

“ WHAT would you say, my readers, if you were shewn four men and four women, who left their homes every evening, merely for the purpose of satisfying their hunger and quenching their thirst together, of talking about the proceedings of mice and the rise and progress of smoke, playing at shuttlecock, and then from pure *ennui* hopping upon one leg, drumming with their fingers, and making grimaces behind one another's backs ? Would you not say they were idiots ? You must not judge so harshly, but observe the occupations of the people who form what is called the great world. Listen to what they say ; look at what they do ! make a faithful abstract of all their words and actions, and you will be convinced that this abstract exactly tallies with that of the occupations of the four pairs here mentioned, whom you were upon the point of calling idiots !

“ The first duty of the world to which I allude, is *visiting* : now what does visiting denote ? Tell me ; is it not passing strange, to drive, run, hurry, pop in for one minute into one place, say nothing, or speak some empty silliness ; after that, make your bow and hurry away to a second place, and a third, and so on ?

The time is lost, the head is unimproved, the heart is vacant, the body is fatigued, and the pocket is eased of a part of its burden which might have relieved the wants of a poor family. In the meantime visits are an all-important occupation, and a man of the world knows no other duty, no other business of a morning, than to dedicate in the first place some hours to his nails, teeth, and hair, (and the signing of bills,) then to drive from one end of the town to the other—a-visiting.

“Another important occupation is *dining*. It is true, this is an indispensable affair, in a literal sense, for the purpose of self-preservation. But in the great world, a principal object of thought is how and where they shall eat. Their greatest happiness consists in eating at that table, where turkeys, fowls, and partridges, are to be fed upon by people of weight—that is to say, people who not only can have at their own table plenty of turkeys, fowls and partridges, but are so situated, that they can also procure for another man the happiness of having plenty of turkeys, fowls and partridges. Revolve it in your mind as you please, but this is the real *rationale* of dining. What are the chief ends of a man of the world? Places, ranks, and pensions? To what do all these tend? That a man, by help of these, may become of more note, that is to say, live better. But what does to live better mean? To have a larger house and a longer table. This again resolves itself into a command of plenty of turkeys, fowls, &c. You may talk of Camilluses, Cincinnatuses, and Fabriciuses. Ancient his-

tory, ancient nonsense ! Such gentlemen now-a-days would pass for idiots. ‘ Other times, other manners ;’ and if any of our modern commanders-in-chief should betake himself to the plough like Cincinnatus, or, like Belisarius, should go a-begging, the district-police would take them both into custody, (not without reason,) for breaking in upon established order, and for vagrancy. Our age is essentially a *dining* age, though it is rather amusing to see people make a pompous scene of the simplest and most animal necessity of nature, and assemble in parade to the sound of music amidst the glare of gold and silver, and all this,—to fill their bellies ! To invite a person to participate in this luxurious operation means to do him *an honour*. Think as you please, but the wolves go to work in a more rational manner. They assemble together when there is prey in view, or the noble wolfish breed is to be continued, but eat together only when the prey has been got by their joint endeavours. It appears to me that it would be a much better fashion to invite guests not to eat but to sleep together. Sleep is also one of the most indispensable of human wants ; consequently, it is in every respect as rational an enjoyment. Sleep is also the nobler of the two ; for it is said that a man can exist nine days without eating, but more than three days he has not strength to resist sleep. The advantages also which such a fashion would have, are incalculable. In the first place, it would be cheaper ; in the second, less nonsense would be talked ; in the third, the constitutions of the guests would suffer less ; and lastly, the landlord or his tradesmen would

not be so soon ruined in doing an honour to a necessary man.

“After dinner there is another important affair—*cards*. Imagine to yourselves beings, created after the image of God, sitting at little tables covered with green cloth, holding in their hands little slips of glazed paper on which are engraved grotesque figures at variance with all the rules of art, and finding their pleasure in contesting who shall have for his share the most spots, or guessing what sort of a slip of paper will fall on such a side. The guessers, or gainers, or simply—rogues, who know how to take advantage of this amusement, become the possessors of money which is either wrung from the peasant who earns the copeek in the sweat of his face, or acquired by the sale of conscience, by inheritance, by dowry, or it may be, the property of another.

“At last the evening comes on—another important affair! This is the time for skipping according to rule, by sound of music. It is true, sheep follow the same fashion, but they only skip when they are satisfied. People in the world, on the other hand, jump like baboons in chains, sometimes with tears in their eyes. This performance is a duty. The landlord wishes to have it said next day, that there was a ball at his house. Such of the guests, then, as are not disabled by the gout, or from over-eating themselves, and whose limbs are not stiff by decrepitude, must skip, and purchase by this performance the privilege of being asked to other houses.

“The last important business is—*supper*; succeeded

by a few hours' sleep, to awake with an aching head, white tongue, and exhaustion over all the members. Next day the same thing is repeated, and the day after the same, and so on till youth and life run their course: the exhausted body then breaks up: the soul departs and leaves behind it no trace of its existence: the name continues some time in the notary's books and tradesmen's accounts, and is at last consigned to oblivion; while a thousand beings, alike in their leading features, run the same course of insignificance, and are cut off the face of the earth like so many oysters. I may ask, is not a high-bred, two-legged animal, of less merit than a merino sheep, which, during its earthly existence, clothes and enriches many people with its wool, harms no one with its tongue, fomented no intrigues to attain a situation which it is incapable of filling, deprives no one of honour or property, and exalts not its head above its fellows, on account of its fleece being finer than theirs?

“ In the great world you will find not only grown-up people, but even children, who speak in many tongues. All the difference consists in some speaking with greater fluency than others. But what do they speak about? I am really ashamed to repeat it. In a family-circle, among persons of both sexes united by mutual advantage, (which is called friendship) in the fulness of their hearts, the favourite occupation is backbiting, which blossoms in the world under the name of frankness and acuteness of observation. Attend to the conversations in small circles—this is their essence: such a one does not know how to dress;

another is a coquette ; another has a bad temper ; another is a fool ; another is a spend-thrift ; another a manœuvrer : this one is unsufferable ; that one is ridiculous ; this one is an awkward creature ; that one is simply an idiot ; this one is quite taken up with himself or herself ; that one is favoured beyond his or her deserts ; and this one is in disgrace, not without cause. In one place it was very dull, in another very pleasant, notwithstanding the landlord or landlady was unbearable. To-morrow we expect that it will be an agreeable party in such a place, but it will be tiresome in such another place ; but, to make up for that, such and such persons of note will be there. In the more splendid parties, what do they talk about ? It is colder to day than it was yesterday. This one has got a situation, that one an order ; this one has lost his place, that one has come to town, and this one is leaving town. In the *magasins de modes* we saw such and such new articles : this dress-maker does her work well, and that peruke-maker understands his business. This lady of note is unwell ; that young lady is going to be married ; this one has been appointed a maid of honour ; that one has been brought to bed of a son ; this one has lost his daughter, &c. &c. &c.

“ My God ! is it for this that man is endued with the gift of speech ? is it for this that he is distinguished from all other creatures by an immortal soul, by a contemplative and creative mind, to waste his breath in unmeaning sounds, like crows and magpies ? Thought and feeling can no more find nourishment in the society of the great world than larks and nightin-

gales can subsist in a barren, sandy wilderness. The carrion-crow is attracted thither by a lifeless carcase: it is his food. The nightingale delights to live among shrubbery, and the lark to hang upon the air!

“To be, from childhood to decrepitude, a life-long slave to what are called the usages of the world; to be a machine for executing bows, and movements of the jaw-bones; to speak without thought, and think without speaking; to listen to nonsense, and answer without sense; to be in continual motion without leaving the circle of unmeaningness—and all this is called life! Ah, my good Arsalan Sultan, thou art right, perfectly right! All hail Kirgheezeian steppe! *There*, at least, *there* is some end; *here*, there is none.”

This is what I wrote in my memorandum-book after two years' experience of the great world. If I chose to describe these years, I might write fifty volumes of nonsense, as like one another as two *elegantes*, a Parisian and a Russian. But so much has been already written upon these topics, that it would be as superfluous as wearisome to enter upon what is nothing else than a continuation of the history of monotony. During these two years, in place of increasing my stock of wisdom, I with difficulty avoided the total loss of what little I previously had. Following literally the instructions of Meloveeden, I procured myself a situation by patronage, received three ranks, although up to this time I do not know where the office stands in which I nominally served, or what was its name: I only recollect that it was something about

public buildings. During these two years I succeeded in making myself a confidant of the old women, a favourite of the old men, acquired many friends among the young people, particularly the young ladies, many of whom found me amiable, kind, worthy, and attentive. But my soul was formed for activity—for strong emotions ; while high life in place of being a career of activity is nothing but a restless sleep.

My mother persevered in her serious, devotional, turn of mind. Meloveeden, having received from some conscientious man ten thousand roubles which he had gained from him at play, and for which he had received his bill when he lived with his wife in Moscow, set out in search of his dear Petronella, learning that she had taken up her abode in seclusion somewhere in Poland. I remained alone in Moscow, and was tormented with ennui. My heart thirsted for something : I sought for gratification, but did not find it. Many ladies smiled upon me : many girls selected me in a *cotillon*, and in the *petits jeux* gave me unequivocal marks of preference. But I did not chuse to be either the slave of female desires ripened before their time, or to make a fraudulent marriage. The handsome Vejeeghen might please the women without being either a nobleman, or the proprietor of fifteen hundred souls ; but before marrying into a good family, he would have had to come to a more particular explanation. I was so considerate, that I did not think either of love or marriage : but this considerateness proceeded from the callousness of the heart, not of the imagination. To spring the mine of the

passions within my breast, nothing was wanting but a spark. Through the icy surface of the great world the cold vapours of calculation are all that penetrate. Some in their simplicity mistake for flame the reflection of the rays from this sheet of ice. Appearances are deceitful ! deceitful ! You will find there no heat, nothing but glare.

Living in the never-ceasing, dissipating confusion of the great world, I still felt the want of diversion ! But among us, a man of the world has no intermediate state between ennui and debauchery. The arts and sciences are barely suffered to sprout : it is a rare chance if they blossom, and they never bear fruit fit to feed a mind slumbering in inactivity. There is, however, one rational amusement in society—the *theatre* : of this I was an ardent admirer ; for, having no time to read to myself, I gladly availed myself of the reading of others. I thus pleased my own taste, besides conforming to the usages of society.

One day I saw an advertisement in the newspaper, that a newly arrived provincial actress would make her *debut* upon the Moscow boards in the character of a coquette. Meloveeden's cousin, my sincere friend, begged me to take a box. "I am so tired," said she, "looking always on our automatons, that I want to see what like a creature a coquette really is." I would have said, that she had only to cast her eyes towards the mirror, but restrained myself, and went to procure a ticket. We drove to the theatre. The curtain rose. The new actress had not yet appeared : cousin Aneta and I exerted our ingenuity at the expence of the un-

fortunate performers, who, as the phrase is, were like to leap out of their skins in their endeavours to please us. On a sudden the new actress appears ; the pit receives her with plaudits ; she curtsies, she bows, approaches towards the orchestra, begins to speak, but I see and hear nothing. "What has happened to you ?" said cousin Aneta, who wished to make some remark upon the dress of the new actress. "For God's sake, what has happened to you ? You are pale, you tremble, you are unwell." "Unwell, very unwell !" said I in a low tone of voice, and left the box. In the new actress I recognized — Groonya. Was I in love with Groonya ? I do not know. I was very young when I fell acquainted with her, and my mind was then incapable of powerful emotions. My passions could only drop, but could not run into my heart. The beauty of Groonya made then a powerful impression upon my imagination, but not upon my heart. Before and after my unfortunate journey to Orenburg, I met with many females prettier than Groonya, but, as soon as I arrived at that age in which the passions come to maturity, without regarding Groonya's deceit, or the evils which I had experienced from her duplicity, I persuaded myself that it would be difficult to find a woman more amiable than Groonya. Her look and the sound of her voice never failed to excite in my mind a sensation which it is impossible to describe in words. I think I could have recognised her amongst a million, though I had been blindfolded, her voice had such a charm in it. It went right to my heart, while her looks had a supernatural

strength to draw and keep my eyes within the sphere of her attraction. Since the time of our last meeting I had endeavoured not to think of Groonya, but she involuntarily recurred to my memory when love spread its nets for me in the great world. There I saw many beauties, but not one pleased me. Ah ! why was not Groonya as perfect in the structure of her mind as in that of her body, I often thought, and again endeavoured not to think more about her. And after all, here she is again before my eyes.

After taking breath in the lobby, I went out into the street, and in the neighbourhood of the theatre, collected my scattered thoughts. I could not explain to myself the reason why the sight of Groonya had produced such an effect upon me. It might have naturally enough been ascribed to sudden fright, or to the dreadful remembrance of that occurrence which had well nigh proved fatal to me. But it was neither the one nor the other. Groonya appeared to my imagination in no frightful colours, but in all the splendour of her enchanting beauty. What a fine woman, thought I ; how she has improved as she has grown up ! But I will never see her again, I must never see her. Absorbed in these reflections, I found myself again in the corridore of the theatre, and almost without perceiving what I was about, entered the box. Since I am here, thought I, (excusing my weakness) I may allow myself to see her in public ; and I am surely not to debar myself from the pleasure of the theatre for that light-headed girl.

“ Are you better ? ” asked cousin Aneta. - - -

"A little," - - - "Ah, how nicely the new actress performs her part!" added she: "what an address, what a noble voice; she seems quite *au fait*! She sings also very agreeably, and has a pretty tolerable person. In truth she is a fortunate acquisition for our theatre, and you may depend upon it, this good-looking Mademoiselle Preemankeen will turn the heads of our Moscow youth." I kept silence and looked at the play-bill to read the name which Groonya had assumed. The first two acts being over, I saw Groonya in the third. She played admirably, and outstripped all the expectations of the amateurs of the drama. There was no end to the plaudits, and at the end of the performance the audience called for her. During the continuance of Groonya's acting I was all on fire. I followed in my mind her every word, her every movement; suffered for her, trembled for her, and almost wept for joy when the loud plaudits resounded through the house. I think I would have died on the spot, if Groonya had not been successful!

After conducting my lady to her carriage, I declined the pleasure of accompanying her home and of spending the evening with her. My limbs moved towards the actors' entrance. I intended, wrapped up in my cloak, to have a nearer glimpse of Groonya. Groonya comes out, but I forgot to conceal myself. "Vejeeghen!" exclaimed she: "Groonya!" said I — and could add no more. She looked at me steadily, then boldly took me by the arm and carried me with her. Her carriage drew up; she seated herself, and ordered me to sit beside her. I was overcome. The carriage rumbled along the

pavement, and I kept silence, not daring to lift an eye, and fearing explanations which were likely to mortify Groonya. She proceeded herself to draw me out of this disagreeable dilemma. "Vanya, my dear friend, my Vanya! Thou hast great reason to abhor me. I am to blame, but not so much as thou thinkest. I was too young and inexperienced: I was not my own mistress, but was obliged to submit to my mother. Thou knowest it all, and my heart tells me that thou forgivest me, that thou wilt love me as before; love *me* as I love *thee*. Tell me, Vanya, did I play well to-day?" I kissed Groonya's hand, heaved a deep sigh, and said: "Thou didst admirably, incomparably! but I do not wonder at it; nature created thee for an actress. Thy playing led me to the brink of destruction, and now thou wishest to take away my peace and happiness. Groonya, thou art too seducing; I fear thee! Allow me to leave the carriage and bid thee adieu for ever!" These last words I pronounced with such a sorrowful air, that even Groonya was touched. I almost choked myself in my endeavours to restrain my tears; my heart was like to burst; my features moved convulsively. "Thou fearest me, Vanya; thou wishest to run away from me; and thou findest me seducing? Vanya, thy words wound me deeply, but still I find myself supremely blest. Believe me, my friend, that I love thee and never ceased to love thee. All the time of our separation, thou wast never out of my heart and mind. If I was to blame for my conduct towards thee, I have atoned for my fault by sincere repentance and pitiable suffering.

Vanya ! love me — or I shall die of despair." At these words Groonya wept.

I was in extacy, and do not recollect what answer I made ; nor can I describe my feelings, for I was in the third heaven ! When the carriage stopped at her door, our hearts were more strongly knit together than before the journey to Orenburg. With light feet we tripped up the stairs, arm-in-arm, and hand-in-hand, entered the room, embraced and kissed like old friends who had never quarrelled. The table was covered. Groonya ordered another *cover* and the best wine to be set down, and taking me by the arm, led me with a candle through all her apartments. " Look, my friend, at my little establishment. Don't it seem as if it wanted a master ? This is my drawing-room. It is not large, but I do not intend to have many guests. This is my dressing-room.—This is my dining-room. Here is my cabinet or study.—Here is my bed-room. Isn't it true that my bed-room is fitted up nicely ?" " All thy rooms, my dear Groonya, are fitted up tastefully and very decently, though not luxuriously : by this I should conclude that thou hast a tolerable salary." " What sort of salaries do they give, my friend !" replied Groonya : " all my hope rests on my benefit. I brought along with me a couple of thousand roubles, which I have almost entirely spent on indispensable wants, and am owing, besides, three thousand roubles for furniture. God is gracious, and I rely upon his providence ; one way or other, I hope to be able to get through, but thou wilt agree, my friend, that a young woman, an actress, with my small abilities and a pretty

tolerable exterior, should not live like a rope-dancer? However, it is supper-time."

After supping with Groonya, I remained till long past midnight, and still had not time to ask her what had induced her to become an actress. Ten times she began to relate her adventures, and ten times I interrupted her, to talk of love! Upon this occasion, all that I learned was, that she had lost her mother and property. She invited me to dine with her next day, and promised to relate her history. It was time to separate. I went home mad with love, continually repeating to myself—"Groonya, dear Groonya, she loves me; there is no doubt that she was innocent in deceiving me." Next morning, it struck me that it must be unpleasant for Groonya to be straitened for want of money, and to be in debt. I therefore sent her, by my man Petroff, five thousand roubles.

Notwithstanding that I lived decently, kept my carriage, and dressed always in the newest fashion, entertained my friends, made small presents to the ladies on their name's-days, and bought confections and toys for all spoiled children in order to please their mammas; bought lottery tickets which never turned out prizes, and paid my card-debts to the old women without ever receiving a kopeek of what they owed me; notwithstanding all these expences, I did not break upon my capital. This will appear to many astonishing, particularly when I add that I used no extraordinary means to acquire money. But, when luck favours a man, money will come into his pocket almost unawares; when, on the other hand, it begins to turn

against him, neither strong-boxes nor bolts can hinder his money from taking wings and flying away. I played games of skill honestly, but dexterously, coolly and attentively: I sat down and played for high stakes, and was almost invariably a gainer. Having no conception of dishonest play, by mere dint of luck I thwarted all the plans laid against me by professional gamblers. When faro was the game, I suddenly put some cards into the heart of a *taille*; if I gained, I pocketed the money and marched home; if I lost, I gave up playing, and never continued till my money was all gone. I proceeded in this way by the advice of Meloveeden, who well knew how to advise, though he was ill able to carry his wise rules into execution—for this reason, because he advised in cold blood, while in action his blood was always heated by his passions. Not being attached either to gaming or money, I played, as it is called, by calculation; and, fortune favouring me, without being a gambler, I lived by play. In the course of two years, I had gained about twenty five thousand roubles ready money, and had, at least, as much owing me. But, as I sent Groonya all that remained on hand, leaving myself only some hundreds for my petty expences, I would now have to break in upon my capital in case of any unforeseen expences. It is true this was greatly against my will; but when I sent the money to Groonya, I thought of Groonya and not of my money. She made a present of a hundred roubles to Petroff, who, when he returned, was quite in raptures with the *good beauty*, as he called Groonya on first ac-

quaintance. She thanked me in such a tender letter, that, when I read it, I could have given her my last kopeek. If any one tells me that he has thought of money and been in love at the same time, I will answer him, in plain terms,—*that* was no love; it was calculation.

CHAPTER VI.

History of Groonya—Intimacy with a clever Actress, or the shortest, surest, and pleasantest road to ruin.

I did not fail to come to dinner. Groonya received me with open arms, laughed, wept, and repeated a thousand times that there was not a happier being in the world than she, now that she was re-established in my affections. During dinner, I related to her in a few words my adventures in the Kirgheeian *steppe*. After dinner we sat down on a divan, and Groonya began her narrative.

“ My father, as you know, left behind him considerable property ; but my mother, to whose management it was intrusted during my nonage, squandered it, besides contracting large debts. You saw our manner of life. At our house assembled all the amateurs and professors of card-playing. All that my mother gained for her share in her copartnery with the professional gamblers, she lost in trying her luck against them, besides losing money of her own. To complete her misfortunes, she fell in love with a young weathercock, who promised to marry her, borrowed from her a large sum of money, and married—another. Our condition, before setting off for Orenburg, was quite desperate : the house was mortgaged, not a kopeek of our capital remained, and we had twice as much debt

as the whole property amounted to. At that time my uncle died, and we hastened to Orenburg to claim what he had left, hoping that every thing would go in our favour.

“I hardly left the boarding-school, where I had learned the usual accomplishments, that is to say, to hold up my head and chatter French, when my mother proceeded to complete my education under her own care, and began to teach me coquetry, in order that, by my beauty and fascinating manners, I might draw rich young men to the house. You have frequently seen how I used to pick out cards for a hot-blooded *ponteur*, and advise him to stake large sums on my good fortune. I always made choice, for this purpose, of players who could not look with composure on my charms, and willingly submitted to me. I need hardly add, that the card chosen by me always lost, as the gamblers whispered into my ear what to fix upon. This was a disagreeable part to perform, but I was obliged to obey, and had, besides, to distribute kind looks and friendly smiles, and listen to all the amorous speeches of the players who were in love with me, and to flatter them with the hopes of reciprocal affection. I give you my word of honour, that I coquetted with the greatest aversion before I knew thee.

“I was ordered to allure thee to the house. This was an extremely agreeable commission. From the time that I left the boarding-school I had no occasion to dissemble, for I loved thee sincerely. Recollect how I not only did not draw thee to play, but even made a practice of withdrawing thee from it. My

mother often scolded me for that ; but I resolutely declared to her, that on the understanding that I was not to allure thee to play, I agreed to decoy others at her discretion. For this reason she left me at rest.

“ In Orenburg another misfortune befell us. The court had scarcely resolved to put us in possession of my uncle’s property, when other claimants appeared ; half a dozen of *elevées* with a will regularly drawn up and witnessed. The property had been acquired by my uncle himself, consequently it would have been at any rate a vain endeavour to attempt to set aside the will ; much more so in this case, where the *elevées* were good-looking girls, and had strong patronage. Baffled in this, my mother opened a gaming-house, wrote to Moscow for some adepts, and appointed me again to play the part of syren, and entice the ill-fated adventurers on the sea of fortune upon our Scylla and Charybdis.

“ Business went very badly with us till winter. We almost lived upon tick. Particularly at first, we were greatly in straits for money. At this time, there arrived in Orenburg, upon government-business, the adjutant of a Petersburg general, Captain Count Lovkoff, a young man of an agreeable person, of a wealthy family, cheerful disposition, and fascinating manners. He saw me on the promenade, fell in love with me, introduced himself at our house, and became a daily visitor. My mother, under threats of her curse, ordered me to use all my arts of allurement to make a prize of Count Lovkoff. The game of love is much more dangerous than any game at cards, and it often

happens, that the loss is upon the side of the party which spreads all its snares to entrap the other. Count Lovkoff lost money in our house, but, to recompense him for that, he asserted his rights over me, and insensibly caught me in the very same toils which I had prepared for him. Hearing patiently his declarations of love, and becoming so accustomed to them, that I felt uneasy when I did not hear them, at last, in order to continue this agreeable amusement, and keep the Count hanging about me, I acknowledged that I liked him. The Count was a man of the world, and experienced beyond his years in affairs of this stamp. We soon formed a close friendship and familiarity, of which you were a witness. - - -

“ You still lived in my heart, but I confess your respectful, timid, love appeared but child’s play compared with the fiery, impetuous passion of the Count. When he learned from Vorovaateen, that you had arrived in Orenburg in search of me, he swore he would annihilate you ; and, in order to save you from danger, I thought it best to keep you at a distance, and even to abuse you.— — It is true, the medicine was rather nauseous, but I thought then that I did well. Your sudden appearance put me into such a state of agitation, that I was beside myself.— — I do not know what I said. Your attempt to lower me in the eyes of the Count put me into a rage. My dear Vanya, forgive me !”

Groonya wept, and I solemnly declared and assured her with an oath, that I entirely forgave her, and did not preserve in my breast the smallest particle of dis-

pleasure for any thing which had happened.—“Be sincere, Groonya,” said I: “all is forgotten, all is forgiven: I love thee more than ever!”

“I wished to learn what had become of thee,” said Groonya. “I was informed that thou hadst been taken ill; that Vorovaateen, the day following, had hired another lodging; that some unknown person had come for thee in a cart, to remove thee into thy new dwelling, but that the landlord of this other lodging had not seen thee. Vorovaateen in a few days left Orenburg, without taking leave of us, and I did not know what had become of thee. A secret voice within me reproached me for my behaviour towards thee. Shocking dreams frequently disturbed my sleep. I saw thee dying, saw thy spectre threatening me with vengeance. I thought that thou wert dead, I wept, I prayed: at last my spirits became gradually calmer, and if I did not forget thee altogether, at any rate I thought seldomer about thee.”

“My dear friend! allow me to cast a veil over the more particular details of my adventures, mixed up as they are with transgressions, the enormity of which I feel in its fullest extent, and of which I repent from the bottom of my soul. The Count, having represented to me in an artful manner my unfortunate situation in a gaming-house, and promising to marry me after the death of his old and sickly father, persuaded me to elope with him secretly for Kieff, where his regiment was quartered, and whither he had been ordered, on having given up the designation of adjutant. It was not long before I saw my error. The Count

was amiable, tender, and respectful, like all lovers till such time as their designs are completed ; but after that, he behaved rudely, capriciously, and coldly, and seemed anxious to rid himself of his credulous victim. Not a day passed without quarrelling, mutual abuse, and tears. The contempt with which I was treated on all sides, stung me to the quick, and the fickleness of the Count who amused himself with other connections, drove me to desperation. At last he declared to me that his father was dead, and that he was obliged to set off immediately for Petersburg. I reminded him of his promise : he was silent. I asked him to take me with him : he affirmed it was impossible. At last he departed, and in a month I learned that his father was alive, and that my lover was married to a rich young lady of an illustrious family.

“ You may imagine to yourself my despair. I thought of returning to my mother who had removed back to Moscow ; but in answer to my letter, I received the news that my mother was dead. I remained an orphan, cast upon the wide world, without a protector, without money, and without my good name !

“ The Count appointed one of his friends to settle with me, and offered me an annuity, on condition of leaving him at peace. I spurned his offer, and wrote his wife a letter in which I exhausted my indignation upon the author of my misfortunes. I was for some time undecided, whether I should live or throw myself into the water. My youth at last got the better of my despair : I grew calmer, but not knowing in what way to get a livelihood, I thought of engaging

myself as a servant. At this time there chanced to be in Kieff a troop of strolling players, composed of half-taught schoolboys, expelled students, half-lettered actresses, and slaves who had got their liberty, or were allowed by their masters to live on passports. The thought suddenly struck me to turn actress. The manager of this horde, a decayed prompter, having examined my abilities for the theatre, was so pleased with me, that he immediately installed me in his troop as first singer, first tragic and comic actress, and first dancer. I declined performing in Kieff, where the officers knew me. We set off for the Malo-russian fairs, where I acquired renown, and drew crowds to the booths in which we performed. I was the main support of the company, and owing to that was looked up to by all, more than even the manager himself. Notwithstanding I had been put over their heads, the women themselves loved me, because I did not interfere in any of their affairs, conducted myself modestly, kept admirers at a distance, and even got the name of being hard-hearted. I had no rest from suitors: some of the small country-gentry offered me their hand, but I preferred a free life, and did not chuse to bury myself alive in the folds of any of these sheep-shearers. The clapping of hands became to me a necessary of life; I thought of nothing but fame!

“Want of money followed us like a guilty conscience, whithersoever we went. When we arrived in any town, we usually lived upon credit, till we succeeded in collecting money to pay our debts and defray our expences to another place. We clothed our-

selves from the proceeds of our benefits, and boarded and lodged at the expense of the common stock or the manager. The division of the profits was regularly preconcerted on our arrival at each fair, but at the winding up, it always appeared that there was nothing to divide. However, we lived, though not in wealth, at least in cheerfulness, not caring for the future, and consoling ourselves with the present.

“ On one occasion, as we passed through a small market-town, the manager announced to us that the exchequer was in such a state of exhaustion, that it was impossible to move further without a fresh supply. We made a halt at the tavern, fitted up a shed in the yard for a theatre, made chandeliers of cask-hoops, erected our own paper scenery, and beplastered all the corners of the streets with written advertisements. Some days elapsed, and we had not a single auditor. At this time there chanced to alight at the tavern a rich gentleman, who was on his way from Petersburg to his estate in the country. Perceiving by our advertisement that our company intended to perform Sumarokoff's tragedy of ‘*Demetrius the Pretender*,’ and the opera of ‘*The Miller*,’ and only waited for an audience to shew off their splendid abilities, the travelling gentleman, for his own recreation, ordered a performance for himself, and at the expence of a fifty-rouble note, entered the theatre *solus* along with his poodle. Notwithstanding that the poodle interrupted our declamation, barking prodigiously as soon as our ‘*Demetrius the Pretender*’ fell into a rage; notwithstanding that the candles, entrenched upon the hang-

ing hoops, partly went out, and partly fell upon the actors' heads ; notwithstanding that there was not a complete fiddle in the whole orchestra, we went through the performance with *eclat*, and the rich gentleman observed in me abilities which he was pleased to call great talents. From pure generosity he made me a present of two hundred roubles to pay my expences to the government-town, where an amateur of the drama entertained a theatrical company. I followed his advice, left my companions, and on my arrival at the government-town, made myself known to the proprietor of the theatre. After my *debut*, I was allowed a benefit on condition of performing a certain number of times for account of the theatre. My benefit was splendid, for the elections of provincial magistrates and the public hunt happened to be at that time. With the money which I had acquired, and letters of recommendation, I set off for Moscow, addressed myself to one of the actresses belonging to the theatre here, and thou, having seen me on my first appearance on the Moscow boards, canst form some idea to thyself of my small abilities and of the success which I am likely to attain in the career that lies before me in this metropolis."

"Dear Groonya," said I, "thou seest nothing but flowers in the path which thou hast chosen, and forget'st to take into account the chance of meeting with reverses. Listen to my advice : give up the theatre ; I will marry thee ; we will go and settle in some country-town, and I with my capital will either enter into trade, or employ myself in agriculture. Hearts which

are happy together want but little outward enjoyments!"

Groonya mused a little, then placing her hand upon my shoulder, and with a look full of tenderness, said: "Vejeeghen! thy Arcadian castles would do for a Vaudeville, but would not answer for real life. Is it possible that, at the name of fame, thy heart can remain cold? Is it possible that the splendid success of thy Groonya does not move thee? Vanya, dear Vanya! if thou only knewest the pleasures arising from public applause, from seeing one's name in print, from reading one's praises in the newspapers, whilst thou lovedst me, thou not only wouldst not wish to withdraw me from my profession, but wouldst be doubly happy in the enjoyment of my love and my good fortune! No, Vejeeghen, I cannot pluck myself from the theatre at the very moment when it is resounding with my applauses, when it procures me both the means of existence and the highest pleasure, and reconciles me with the world, from which I may say, I deserted. Wait a little while, allow me to indulge in my present enjoyments, and then —— I am thine for ever."

I wished to dispute, to argue the matter, but Groonya begged me to make an end of my discourse. "Fame and love!" exclaimed she: "that is the watch-word of a good actress. Take things as they are, or I will be unhappy!"

It was my duty to submit, or rather it was not my duty, but I thought it better to submit —— and held my peace. A month passed: Groonya became an ob-

ject of adoration to all the lovers of the fair sex and of the drama, and an object of envy to all coquettes. She triumphed : I suffered and was silent. There was gradually formed in my house a small society of the patrons of dramaturgy, of humble and officious servants of actresses who follow in the wake of any one of their sisters who bears the bell, in order to catch a cast-off admirer or get their benefit tickets disposed of, and of some of the official people connected with the theatre, who are as indispensable for the success of an actress as the wooden stands are for the scenery. But Groonya behaved herself admirably. Towards the rich and noble dramatic amateurs she behaved with a respectful pride ; received them only on fixed days and at fixed hours, all together in the presence of other females, and did not allow the smallest freedom either in word or behaviour. The officers* of the theatre she knew how to treat in such a manner that they invariably anticipated her wishes. Groonya passed for a phoenix of wit and a nonpareil of virtue. In the higher circles nothing was talked of but the beautiful Russian actress, who spoke French admirably. This last circumstance put the hoary admirers of the fair sex beside themselves. "A Russian actress speak French?—*C'est charmant ! c'est charmant !*" replied the old gallants : "what a pity that she is virtuous ! Virtue in an actress !—— an extravagance which ought not to be tolerated." So the gallants reasoned, but Groonya smiled, and loved me alone.

* The theatre, as well as the church, is, in Russia, united to the state.

One day I found Groonya quite melancholy ; her eyes were red, her cheeks were pale—it seemed she had been crying. I was amazed. “ Dear Groonya, what has happened to thee ; tell me for God’s sake ? ”

“ Ah, Vejeeghen, what an unfortunate being I am ! They have given me the principal part to perform in the new opera, to gratify the malice of that foolish and faded creature Maskeen, who prides herself merely because she can do what she likes with the property of Count Jalkeen, and appears upon the stage in a blaze of gold and diamonds. She will perform the second part in that opera ; that was my doing in spite of all the intrigues of the Count’s party. I had, however, to put up with a monstrous silly declaration of love from an ass of an *employé* behind the scenes. - - -

- - - Don’t fear, Vanya ; I see thy eye swelling and thou art losing heart already : I only heard the declaration, and have now quite forgotten it. Be that as it may, the principal part falls to me ! Now what does that spiteful Maskeen think to do. She has to represent my rival, a rich old widow ; and so she has ordered a wonderfully rich dress embroidered with pure gold upon velvet, and intends to appear with a load of brilliants beside me, who will be in false gold and glass pearls ! ” Groonya wept. “ But there are ways and means to remedy that,” said I, stammering : “ do not cry, but let us consult about it coolly.”—

“ What is the use of consulting ? out of a hundred old debauchees I might easily find one who is agreeable and who would be ready to ruin himself for my sake. But for millions of money I could not bear to

have to do with lifeless bodies. Every woman has her own way of thinking ; but I could never on any account agree to say *looblyoo* (I love) to a man to whom *memento mori* would be more fitting. Young beauties are either bare as hawks, or so much occupied with themselves, that they imagine their looks are prettier and more valuable than diamonds. What conscience there, Vanya ? I love thee alone, and would prefer to sink and burn for shame rather than be false to thee." I kissed Groonya's hand and said : "My dear Groonya! thy playing will eclipse the splendour of Maskeen's dress." "How can I play well when I have that doll with all her vain-show before my eyes !" "What would a dress cost ?" "Fifteen hundred." "Fifteen hundred is not much, but the brilliants." "The brilliants could be borrowed, only a deposit would have to be made for them. For my own use I only want a pair of decent diamond ear-rings and a pearl-clasp : all the rest might be borrowed. But let us drop the subject ; sit down beside me, Vanya, and we will talk about something else." "Excuse me, Groonya, but I cannot remain longer at present. I have but one request to make : do not torment thyself, and undertake nothing till dinner time. I will come and dine with thee, and we will again lay our heads together. Who knows but perhaps even Vejeeghen may be able to do something for thee !"

In a state of strong agitation I left Groonya. She loves me, thought I—she disdains all other connections from love to me, and for my sake even sacrifices female vanity and self love. O my invaluable Groonya ! I

ought to recompense thee for this disinterested affection, and return to thee a part of the pleasure which I enjoy from thy love. With these thoughts, I flew home, took my bank-receipts, went with them to the *opekoonsky sovyet*, took up ten thousand roubles, and set off immediately to a jeweller. I selected a beautiful pair of ear-rings and pearl *fermoir*, for six thousand roubles, borrowed a diadem, necklace, and bracelets, valued at twenty-five thousand roubles, leaving in pledge my remaining bank-receipts, and returned to Groonya, who was just sitting down to dinner, supposing that I would not come. She received me tenderly but with a melancholy countenance. "Thou knowest, Groonya, that I have a superstitious fear of dreams?" "What of that?" "I dreamed last night that during dinner something unexpected occurred to thee: put my mind at ease, my dear, by seeing if all is right in the kitchen. Dost thou know that in a house lately, the cook, in place of sugar, sprinkled a tart with arsenic which had been placed in a cupboard for killing rats!" "My God, what strange thoughts arise in thy noddle!" said Groonya, and went out of the room, whilst I in the meantime opened my budget and placed on a small table the jewellery, along with a couple of thousand roubles for a dress. As soon as she came back into the room, I waited her at the door, and, taking her by the hand, led her up to the table, saying: "Begone dull care; I pray thee begone from Groonya." She looked at the things, then cast such a glance at me as almost melted me on the spot; threw herself into my arms, screamed out and fainted.

I carried her to the sofa, and called to the maid-servant, ran, bustled about, sprinkled her with water and perfumes, and at last succeeded in bringing her to herself. "Vanya," said she, "I know not how to thank thee; this heart which belongs to thee, feels, but my tongue is too weak to express."

Groonya, in the spring-tide of spirits which followed her past depression, was in such glee that I feared she would lose her senses. She screamed, laughed, sung, and was continually trying on, at one time the diadem, at another time the necklace, and at another time the bracelets. I obliged her to sit down at the table, but she every minute rose from her chair in order to look into the mirror and adjust her ornaments according to her fancy. "Groonya," said I, "thou that art so wise! surely these splendid toys cannot be of such value in thy eyes as to absorb all thy thoughts?" "No, my friend," replied she: "it is not the things which I care for, but the triumph over my haughty rival—a triumph which she does not anticipate—and which will be more valued by me, as the obligation comes from thee!"

In the mean time, the day of the performance approached, and Groonya made known to me, that the friends of Count Jalkeen were hatching a conspiracy against her. "Dear Vanya," said Groonya to me, "the world does not know of our close intimacy, and so it is also necessary for thee to form a party in my favour. I could easily do that myself, but I do not wish to excite thy jealousy or wound thy sensibility. Take some dozens of tickets, tell thy friends that thou

hast gained them in a wager, and distribute them gratis. Give a dinner or *dejeuner* to some of the most hot-headed, noisy, and daring bullies, and instruct them to support the right cause, encourage me by their plaudits, and call me to come forward, while on the other hand they hiss Maskeen." I attempted to object, but Groonya closed my mouth with her fair hand, kissed me, and demolished with a smile the whole of my philosophic battery. I was obliged, that is to say, I was inclined to submit.

At last the day of the performance came on. On that day, I gave a dinner in a tavern near the theatre, to a party of friends—bullies that is to say ; and when they were all half-seas-over, proposed to them to go to the theatre, to support the right side, distributing at the same time the tickets. We entered the theatre all in a body, and my friends only waited for my signal to hiss or clap their hands. In the mean time Groonya remained in her dressing-room till it should be her turn to come upon the stage. When she made her appearance, Maskeen was quite confounded at the sight of the brilliants and of the rich dress which Groonya wore ; and the whole behind-the-scenes faculty joined in pronouncing that it was impossible to be better or richer-dressed than Groonya. She was beside herself with joy, and this disposition of mind had such a powerful effect upon her acting, that she really surpassed all expectations ; while Maskeen in despair at her rival's triumph, forgot her part, and bungled the performance. The friends of Count Jalkeen did what they could to support his mistress, but the hisses of

our party drowned their feeble plaudits, and Groonya, loaded with applause during the continuance of the piece, was called upon the stage after its conclusion, while Maskeen, covered with shame and ridicule, abused Groonya behind the scenes, and on her return home, quarrelled with the Count.

I was received by Groonya with open arms. She had a party of guests to supper, but I was so distracted with the various emotions of that day, that I felt myself unwell and went home.

In proportion to Groonya's success in her dramatic career, and in proportion to the extent of her fame, it behoved her to dress better than, or at least as well as, other actresses, to have more suitable apartments, and to keep her own carriage. I would on no consideration agree that Groonya should have recourse to others to supply her wants, and accordingly did the needful. She had no shawls, but never asked me for any: when I asked her to take an airing with me, or to put on her brilliants of an evening, she would refuse with a smile, because she had no shawl, and without that, it would be quite foolish to go an airing or wear rich dresses. As a matter of course I had to buy a few shawls—what I had brought with me from the *steppe* having been sold.

At length, three new performances, two changes of lodgings, the completing of her wardrobe and winter-clothing, the setting up of her carriage, one celebration of her name's-day, and one of her birth-day, in the course of the year, eased me of forty thousand roubles, and brought me ten thousand roubles into

debt. I repeat that she never asked me for anything, and I had not the smallest inclination to purchase with money either the love or the good graces of any one. Neither I nor Groonya had any idea, when it happened, that such a deal of money had been spent. She wished to possess certain objects, and my money was the natural and obvious means to be used for putting these objects into her possession. It was left out of the calculation, that the one had to be parted with before the other could be procured ! Here I remained without a kopeek in the world, without any means of procuring more money, and obliged to maintain my poor mother. - - - - Reflecting upon my situation made me desperate, but I had not the spirit to tell Groonya of my misfortune. I even thought of shooting myself, thought of running to the Kirgheezian *steppe*, but my mother's condition restrained me. For some days I did not dare to appear before Groonya, and sat shut up in my room, thinking how I might decently keep my head above water. I told my mother that I was unwell. I could contrive nothing, and only fifty roubles remained in my purse. I had already written to Arsalan Sultan by way of Orenburg, but had received no answer. I now again wrote to Arsalan and the Kirgheezian elders, informing them of my place of residence, and begging them to send me the remainder of the money which fell to my share from the sale of the booty. The silence of my friends of the *steppe* was no good omen. In the meantime I feared lest my friends, patronesses, and creditors should hear of my ruin. A thousand projects were

born and died within my head, when on a sudden, on the evening of the sixth day, my room-door opened with a bounce, and in came—Groonya.

CHAPTER VII.

Deliver us from evil.—A lesson of systematic robbery.—The advice of an old soldier.—Again flush of cash.

“WHAT does this mean, my dear friend, that thou hast forsaken me?” said Groonya. “Is it such a mighty matter that thou hast squandered thy money?” “How! dost thou know it already?” “Why should not I know it, when thy own Petroff told me of thy grief.” “The rascal!” exclaimed I.—“Don’t get into a passion: he is thy sincere friend. Having seen that thou hadst lost thy cheerfulness and given up all thy usual habits, he guessed that thy purse was in a galloping consumption. At last when he perceived thee beginning to examine and handle thy pistols, the worthy Petroff could contain himself no longer, but ran to me to request me to come to thy *rescue*. Why art thou silent?” I scowled on Groonya in confusion and shame, and observed in her countenance, cheerfulness and smiles. “Cease thy sulking,” said Groonya: “Isn’t it a shame for a Kirgheezian cavalier to take to heart the loss of his booty, when he is safe and sound in his own person? Hast thou not called me, many a time and oft, thy treasure and happiness. Here am I before thee, and yet thou repinest at the loss of thy money!” Groonya seated herself on the sofa, ordered me to sit beside her, and said: “How

much may it be that we have spent this year?" "More than fifty thousand!" Groonya burst into a laugh—"Excellent; capital!" exclaimed she: "but still it strikes me that we have been very economical! Judge now for thyself, if it is worth the while to repine for the loss of money? It is real dust which is carried about and blown away by the wind." "Consoling philosophy!" said I: "but without money it is impossible to exist; and love however tender, and friendship however disinterested, can fill only the heart."— — Groonya interrupted my words—"Ah! how wise thou art grown without money!" said she: "but leave these meditations, my dear Vejeeghen; there is nothing more wearisome in the world than the reasonings of a pennyless philosophy! Tell me now how much thou hast remaining?" "Less than nothing." "How so?" "That is to say, debts and inability to pay them." "I understand thee! But listen to me, Vejeeghen: I am come expressly to draw thee out of this unfortunate scrape. Be firm and fearless. An old acquaintance of my mother's, Yakoff Prokófyaaveetch Zaráyzeen begs permission of me to keep a faro-bank in my house." - - - - "Groonya! thou art again for having recourse to dishonest shifts which have already been the ruin of thy family!" "Since the day that I was born, I never handled a card, nor do I mean ever to do so; consequently I can lose nothing. Zaráyzeen will give me an equal share of his gains without any risk on my part, merely for permission to play in my house." "That is to say, to make sure work, to steal, to commit downright

robbery !” “ But what have we to do with that, my dear friend ?” said Groonya coolly : “ Every one is gifted with will and reason : he who does not know how to regulate the one and use the other, ought to be sent to school, and of course pay for his lessons.” “ My pennyless philosophy is, I confess, more wearisome than thine : but thine, on the other hand, is as good as a licence to travel at full speed to Siberia.” “ What gibberish thou speakest : observe what it is that people live upon who constitute a large proportion of the great world, and are received and respected in society. One has enriched himself by bribes, another by spoliation of the public purse, another by being a trustee or guardian, another by robbing under the mask of law. ‘ Nobody’s a thief till he’s caught,’ the proverb runs ; and rich rogues make it a theme of self-commendation, that they have acquired their fortunes by their talents. Look around thee, and thou wilt see that one half of the town cheats and preys upon the other. The difference is only in the games which they play : some at politics, some at trade, some at government, some at law, some at faro, and some at whist.” “ Groonya, dear Groonya,” said I, kissing her hand ; “ thou art a very demon in the shape of an angel : I cannot dispute with thee, but do not oblige me to be dishonest, by taking advantage of my weakness ! I love thee so that I can refuse thee nothing. I can only pray : ‘ lead me not into temptation !’ ” — “ I do not propose to thee to engage in play thyself,” said Groonya : “ thou wilt be only my deputy with Zaráyzeen, to watch his motions lest he

should defraud me, and to see that he act properly, that is to say, that he do not commit himself, but use his skill with moderation. For that purpose, thou must thyself become acquainted with all the tricks of gambling." "I do not know one of them. I have heard of some of them, but know not as to how they are put into practice." "Zaráyzeen wants a *croupier** and *moitiant*,† who has not got into notoriety, and has what is called an imposing appearance. For that purpose he could not find a better man in the world than thee. Thou art modest in thy behaviour, easy in thy manners, of an agreeable exterior, kind"— — Groonya at these words, smiled, patted me on the head, and kissed me. I quite forgot myself.

After talking for some time on other subjects, Groonya left me Zaráyzeen's address, and told me to call upon him next day at ten o'clock in the morning, saying that he was already informed of my coming, and would expect me. She left me, wishing me more cheerfulness, firmness of spirit and—philosophy!

For the thousandth time since I had linked myself with Groonya, I exclaimed: 'Oh human weakness!' for the thousandth time I repeated the prayer: 'lead us not into temptation;' and remained just as I was before.

My mother observed that a great change had taken place in me, that I had grown grave, gloomy, and fretful. In the companies of the great world, which

* The *croupier* sits beside the banker, marks the winnings, and settles with the *ponteurs*.

† The person who has the half of the game.

I still continued to frequent, I was as amiable as ever : but a man in society, and a man at home, are two quite different persons. The domestic tyrant, the tormentor of his servants and family, frequently passes in the world for the most amiable of men : he who makes others split with laughter by the exuberance of his gaiety, frequently comes from, and goes back to, a house of weeping. To learn a man's character aright, you must observe him, first in his conduct as a citizen, and secondly in his conduct at home. A bad father to good children—a bad husband to a good wife—a bad son to good parents, can never be good members of society : such people do not deserve to be trusted with power over a dog, much less over their fellow-creatures.

I told my mother that unforeseen losses had eaten up my property, and that I would now have to work for a livelihood. My mother did not reproach me, nor shew any symptoms of anger. She begged me to allow her to retire to a nunnery, the superior of which had offered to receive her. I agreed, and my mother the same day made up her mind, taking a promise from me at the same time, to visit her every day or at least thrice a week.

In the meantime I went according to agreement to Zaráyzeen. His servant shewed me into a parlour very neatly furnished, where I found Zaráyzeen walking up and down the room. He was a little man, had passed his fortieth year, was pale and thin, had a pair of penetrating eyes, and put on some odd grimaces similar to the imitations which lackeys attempt of their

master's airs. According to my system of physiognomy, his eyes and mouth indicated cunning, impudence, and cowardice. He wore over his eyes a green shade, although gifted with such extraordinary powers of vision, that he could see the smallest dot on the cards with his naked eye as with a microscope. His fingers were extremely long and thin. On his right hand, his first and middle finger were bound with black taffeta. He was continually engaged in shuffling and cutting the cards, even when he was in conversation with me, in order, as he said, not to lose time uselessly, and gradually to perfect himself in the mechanism of his profession. Yakoff Prokófyaaveetch was dressed in a peculiar way: his cravat was tied tightly about his neck, his wide-sleeved coat hung upon him as if it were on a peg, and his short small-clothes and boots which came up to his knees, gave his legs the appearance of twisted pillars of the Gothico-Arabic style of architecture. Yakoff Prokófyaaveetch seldom looked any man in the face with whom he happened to be speaking; or if he did so, it was only when the conversation did not run upon business, but upon some collateral subject.

"I beg you will be seated," said Zaráyzeen, pointing to the sofa: "Extremely glad to go together with you. Agraphéna Stepánovna was pleased to inform me that you were acquainted with my intimate friend Luke Ivanoveetch (Vorovaateen). A much esteemed, excellent man! - - - He and I have done a deal of business together in our time. I am sorry I cannot learn where he is now." I was silent. Zaráy-

zeen renewed the conversation : " I heard that you have pleased to engage in high play, and have been very fortunate. May I ask—did you deal or punt ? " * " I punted, but played more at games of skill. " " I understand you : with *your own cards*, with *partners* ; † but at faro you have assuredly pleased to play with *your own people*, for *sale* ? " ‡ " Neither the one nor the other. I played fairly. " " Ah, so much the better : but Agraphéna Stepanovna did not please to tell me that you played *fairly*. " I looked into Zaráyzeen's face to signify my amazement and non-comprehension of his expression. " You do not please to understand," says he, " what is the meaning of *fairness* ? It means dexterity, expertness. " At these words, Zaráyzeen made a movement with his fingers as if he wished to make his joints crack. " No, you do not guess correctly," replied I : " Agraphéna Stepanovna told you, and I repeat it, that I know nothing at all of cards, and that if you wish me to be useful to you, you must initiate me into the mysteries of your art. " " To be sure, you must learn something of it," replied Zaráyzeen : " will you take the trouble to walk into my cabinet ? I will give you the first practical lesson by shewing you the instruments. "

* Play against the bank.

† Partner is one of three who conspire together in a game of skill, to fleece a fourth person ; sometimes they play with *marked*, that is to say, their *own cards*.

‡ The banker goes snags with many people, and having made a previous agreement with some one of his friends, shuffles the pack in a certain way, or lets his friend know what card will gain, who of course carries off the stakes. This is called ' *to sell*. '

From the parlour we went into a cold room where there was a variety of different articles in the greatest confusion. Pictures, porcelain, bronze figures, horse-furniture, *meerschau*-pipes, and rich fowling-pieces were lying about the windows, chairs, tables, and floor. There were besides, here and there, chests and cases of wines, &c. All these things were covered with a thick coat of dust and dirt. In the next room, or cabinet, all the three windows were hung with green Venetian blinds. Under the windows stood small tables covered with large sheets of paper, and in the middle of the room was a large table covered with green cloth. Zaráyzeen went up to one of the small tables, took off the paper, and I saw some *tailles* of cards, and on a plate, dark-blue and red paint rubbed down, and some crow-quills.

"I suppose you may guess," said Zaráyzeen, "that this is the pictorial branch of our art, that is to say, *dotting*. The best cards for *dotting* are those whose backs are finished with spots. By one extra dot in a known place, one can read the other side as well as if the pack lay open. Cards are *dotted* in the middle for *verkhovka*. You do not know the meaning of *verkhovka*?" "No, sir." "Please to observe: you deal your *own* cards, and when the punting takes place, you always know what lies uppermost: by this means you are insured from the loss of your *sleepers*. This is a most impregnable play, and is only made use of against experienced gamblers. The advantage is here not more than ten per cent.

"Look at these cards with *dotting* on the edges; they

serve for catching the *sleepers*. An eye that is sure and sharp, sees sometimes the fourth card in the banker's pack, and then adieu to the bank ! These are banker's cards with *dots* on the corners, in order that, by knowing when a card goes with a parcel of other cards, you may draw it from under."

Zaráyzeen after this pulled out a drawer in the table, took out a snuff-box, and put it into my hand. "Do you see any thing about this ?" asked he. "Nothing particular, but that it is weighty and very well made," replied I ——. "It is weighty because it is inlaid with gold, and the top is of platina, and because its weightiness is of great use. Don't you see that its outer-bottom is surrounded with a small seam or rim, and that the very centre of the bottom is ornamented with a little flower which has a small projecting point ? Please to observe now—here for instance I am banker." On this Zaráyzeen sat down at the table, took the cards into his hand, and continued the demonstration. "Suppose that I see, that the second card would be a great acquisition to the *ponteur*. I place the cards upon the table, cover the pack with my snuff-box, as it were out of precaution to prevent the *ponteurs* from seeing them : I take out my handkerchief and wipe my nose, then I open my snuff-box, take snuff, proceed to cast off, and lo, you see, the seven which should have been upon the left, lies upon the right." "How has this happened ?" ask I in amazement.—"This is the way. In the snuff-box there are two bottoms, one of gold, the other of platina. The gold one is thin and elastic, and in the platina bottom that

flower is fixed on a spring, and the projecting point smeared with an imperceptible portion of wax or glue. When I take snuff, I press the centre with my finger, the uppermost card sticks to the flower upon the snuff-box, and is kept snugly within the rim, while the second card becomes the uppermost. Now for the other card which I want to place on the right. Exactly in the same way I place the snuff-box on the cards, press the bottom with my fingers, and the card is discharged from the flower, and lodged on the top, while that which should have gained in the first cast-off is a losing concern to the *ponteur* in the second. Isn't it true, that this is very nice?" I nodded in token of assent. "This is a new Petersburg invention of a bosom-friend of mine who is on the best terms with the artists, who, you know, must not be fallen out with. You see people of skill cannot be caught but by the most simple expedients. I have also a favourite black coat which I am in the practice of wearing during play.—In the right sleeve of that coat there is also a mechanical contrivance for picking up cards. It deserves to be called a miracle rather than an invention: I will shew it you afterwards. You have only to lean your arm upon the pack, and the card vanishes, the same as with the snuff-box."

We proceeded to another small table, and Zaráy-zeen having taken off the paper, pointing to a heap of cards, continued:—"These are *prattlers*, that is to say, a certain number of cards shaped in such a way, that when they are shuffled among the rest, the broad ones may be picked out and brought together by calcu-

lation. There are a number of *prattlers*, and they are arranged by different keys. There are some where all the first thirteen cards lose, that is to say, where the *ponteur* does not gain a single trick : there are light *prattlers* with a variety of *bends* and with false *inequalities*. *Prattlers* are only used in playing with green-horns. Now-a-days, please to observe, the world is grown wiser ! Here are the different cuts of cards for arranging the hands in shuffling. For this one must have an uncommon agility of fingers, more so than is required in fashionable piano-fortists, and this talent is acquired only by time and labour. You see that my fingers are tied up—please to observe, the skin of these fingers is so filed off, and the body of them is so softened with ointment, that, during play, I can guess the cards by the mere sense of touch, and the points are suppler than any spring. But you will not soon arrive at such a degree of perfection : that is the fruit of my twenty years' experience, joined to incredible exertions. You will be my *croupier*, and so it will be necessary for you to attend chiefly to the *punting*, and to look after the players at my bank. I cannot attend to this, as I shall be taken up in the more abstract contemplations of the art, in order to make use of my banking experience, while you in the meantime see that no false brothers steal a march upon us by introducing themselves under the mask of green-horns."

We passed to a third table, and Zaráyzeen, on removing the paper as formerly and shewing me different cards, continued his lecture. "Here you see this

three. Look again—once ! There is a *deuce*—once again ! and here is an *ace*.” Zaráyzeen merely lifted the card from the table, and the spots on the card actually changed at his command. “Do you know what that is ?” asked Zaráyzeen. “This is a Russian invention, though it has a French name, and for the former reason it is not so terrible a machine as its name’s sake. This is a *guillotine*. Here please to observe—I unglue, and to this watch-spring are fixed cut spots. The watch-spring is placed in the centre, and its end is upon the edge of the card. Moving the end with the finger, the spots appear or disappear at pleasure. The *guillotine* can be made out of all cards except figures. But I have also reserve-figures or masques. Please to notice—here on one card is a king and queen, on another a knave and king, &c. This is made of figures with two heads. The painted card is unglued and opened, and changeable heads put on. For *dark* cards and for *sleepers* this is very well. These other cards are a little more ingenious. Do you see, here I place a *seven* : the *six* will gain, and my card immediately changes into a *six*. These are *sprinkled* spots. A spot is made upon the card with fine glue, and is sprinkled with a fine powder or burnt bones. The card of course is *dark* ; and, if one of my cards has gained, I turn this up as it is, and gain this trick also : if another should gain before I play this card, I cancel a spot before turning my card, and again pocket the money.

“Here are *sacks*—this card, you will please to observe, is dissected in the middle, and an empty space

is left in it for inclosing bank-notes. If the card should lose, the *ponteur* takes the card from the table and leaves some bank-notes ; if this card should gain, the *ponteur* dexterously shakes out the bank-notes from the sack, and the banker pays sometimes ten-fold, particularly in case of gaining the corners.

“ Please to look into this box ! Here are instruments—a *wolf's tooth* for glazing *dotted cards* ; cherry glue ; here are *brass plates* of different forms for cutting the cards with those small scissars. And here in the cup-board stands a *press* for squeezing together cards which had been ripped up and newly shut.—Would you like to know what is on that large table under the green-cloth ? *Prepared cards*. But for the first time you have had enough. Come, walk into the other room, we shall have breakfast and a little chat about our approaching campaign.”

Breakfast already stood on the table, but there was neither plate nor wine. Zaráyzeen took the keys out of his pocket, called his footman, and returned with the wine and table-service. When the footman left the room, I said :—“ Surely that servant of yours behaves ill, when you do not intrust him with silver ? ” “ I have observed nothing to his prejudice during the course of ten years service,” replied Zaráyzeen : “ but I, sir, am accustomed to trust no one ; for that is the very best preventive against being taken in by any one. Why should we expose ourselves to an unnecessary evil ? ‘ Do not lead into temptation ! ’ Why furnish a man with an opportunity to rob you ? ” I made no reply, but inwardly cursed my love which made me a

colleague of such a hellish creature. "Please to observe," said Zaráyzeen : "Agraphéna Stepánovna is a very good girl and an old acquaintance of mine besides ; but she is a little thoughtless, a little too fond of her own way, and a little inclined to throw away her money. We should not then entirely trust her with all our affairs and all our pecuniary transactions. She is ready to forewarn a man if he pleases her fancy ; and, if she knows exactly the amount of our winnings, she is capable, whenever she is in straits, of demanding from us more than justly falls to her share. Do you please to understand me ? I have a practice when I play on joint account with any one, to dislodge from the bank into my boots : you ought to do the same when I make a wry face, and say to you, '*the boots pinch.*' After this we will go home and settle together." "We shall see !" said I, and made haste to leave Zaráyzeen in order to return to Groonya.

"Thou hast brought me acquainted with a confounded rascal !" said I to Groonya. "Thou certainly dost not suppose," replied she, "that for biting biters I should choose an honest man ? A truce to childishness, Vanya : thou art quite tiresome with thy school-boy virtue. We shall rob nobody of his money, but will only take it from those who wish for an opportunity to get rid of it. Otherwise, if the thing is disagreeable to thee, I shall not press it upon thee : but in that case, thou must lay aside thy intolerable jealousy." "I have resolved !" exclaimed I almost in tears, and went home in order to conduct my mother to her nunnery, promising to return to Groonya in

the evening. Zaráyzeen was then to open his first sitting.

After attending my mother, I returned home with a sore heart, and stretched myself out upon a sofa. Petroff entered the room, and standing at the door in the attitude of *attention*, said : " Will your honour allow his devoted Petroff to offer a word of advice ? " " Speak. " " We have no money ! " " No ; and so, go and seek service with some one who has money. " " Forefend me God from that : you are my benefactor, Ivan Ivanoveetch, and I will not leave you till death. A soldier wants but little ; a cloak on his shoulders, and a biscuit in his wallet. I can work with the neighbours for a daily ration, and will be always ready to serve your honour. But it is not that which I come to speak about. " " What is it then which thou would'st be at ? " " Agraphéna Stepánovna is a — — pretty woman ! " " I know that without thy telling. " " Fawning as a rabbit, chattering as a swallow, with a windpipe like a lark ! " " Is that the case ? " " Yes, Sir ; she spends more money in a day, than a whole company of grenadiers in a month. " " What business hast thou with that ? " " Business, your honour ! because I love you more than my own father, love you as I did the commander of our company, peace to his soul : he died of his wounds in my arms ? Do you think I do not know how your money has slipped through the tender, white little fingers of Agraphéna Stepánovna ? " " That is no affair of thine. " " No affair of mine, but a vexation of mine ! Your honour, Ivan Ivanoveetch ! I would be glad to

lay down my life for you, and it sickened me and grieved me to see, that on account of Agraphéna Stepánovna your own aunt Adelaida Petrovna has been obliged to leave the house, and you yourself will soon have no where to lay your head in the wide world. If a man is to perish, better let it be by a cannon-ball, or a bullet, than by a hussey's hankerings. We will come to no good with these Moscow beauties. Why can't you enter the military service and climb the Caucasus? Here, Sir, you cannot do without carriages and furniture, and a score of suits of clothes, and God knows what else: but there, a young officer wants nothing but his own good sword and his courage; and you are well supplied both with the one and the other. Besides, the life there is a life of cheerfulness! Every divine day a skirmish, yes and with what boys, what marksmen, what horsemen, who, except the Russians, don't fear the devil himself. Capital wines, superb mutton, delicate bread, and what girls! They say that the Turkish Sultan himself in his burgh of the Tzars wishes for nothing better. There is only one misery for a Russian soldier, that he cannot always get a drink of *quass* or a bowl of *shtchee*, but to you, Sir, that will be no privation. Oh, if your honour would but listen to an old soldier! You would see how nicely the breezes of the Caucasus would blow away the vapours of love; and you may depend upon it, the Circassian horsemen would take your fancy more than Agraphéna Stepánovna."

I was really pleased with Petroff's proposal, but love and debt kept me in Moscow. "I thank thee,

brother, for thy advice, and doubly thank thee for thy love. I will consider of what thou hast said, and tell thee on the first opportunity. In the meantime give me my coat : I must go out."

The *soiree* at Groonya's was splendid. She had invited some first-rate beauties among the actresses, and a number of the wealthy amateurs of the drama, who admire that art less in the spirit than in the flesh, and in the comely incarnations of the dramatic muse. The company was at first engaged in conversation and music ; then as it were to clear off old scores, Zaráyzeen and I sat down in the corner-room to play at *shtoss*.* Groonya, as if in jest, begged one of her rich guests to join her in stripping the bank, adding that she was very fortunate in drawing cards for *ponteurs*. Some ladies' men begged Groonya to draw cards for them. The play began at first on a small scale : it gradually grew deeper, and before it was concluded, Zaráyzeen emptied all the pocket-books. It was kept up till six o'clock next morning, and, after the guests departed, we divided the winnings into three shares, and each of us got about eight thousand roubles. Zaráyzeen, however, was very much displeased with me, because I asked him if his boots did not pinch his legs ; and obliging him to take them off before me, I found in them two heaps of bank-notes and a handful of gold. In order to pacify Zaráyzeen, I told him that I did this merely in order to quiet the suspicions of Groonya, who saw him in

* A species of faro.

the act of putting money into his boots. The rogue did not believe me, but feigned that he did so. In this way, the smallest departure from the road of honesty brings with it a multitude of evils. Becoming connected with a gambler to cheat others, I became at once a liar to cheat Zaráyzeen, conceiving there was no harm in paying a rogue in his own coin. This easy acquisition of money turned my head and stifled my conscience. I returned home quite cheerful; threw the money into my *commode*, and gave Petroff a twenty-five rouble note, saying: "On the Caucasus, brother, it may be good living, but in Moscow it is better. Let us first take our cheer here, and afterwards we shall see!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Card-Table Swindlers.—Letter from Meloveeden.—He finds his Wife.—Petronella's Repentance.—Bankrupt-sequestration in Poland, or check and mate to creditors.—The end of Mr. Golordoffsky.—Mr. Ponteefsky, his other Son-in-Law.

THE profession of a card-table swindler unites in itself all the vices which degrade humanity. There is no meanness of which a swindling gambler is not capable, in order to draw into his toils a man who has a passion for play. Card-table swindlers, like real demons, rack their brains to invent all sorts of temptations to deprive a man of his worth and good name, to drag him into the slough of vice, and ruin his family. And yet these people are received into first-rate society, and enjoy all the privileges accorded to birth and merit. A poor thief that has stolen twenty-five roubles, though it were to keep him from starving, is punished as a culprit, while these regular thieves drive about proudly in rich equipages, live on habits of intimacy with the first nobility, look down with contempt on a poor but honest man from whom they can fleece nothing, and even take upon them to criticise the actions of other people. Poor humanity—such are thy customs! Who is to blame? The laws condemn a swindling gambler to opprobrium and punishment, but custom interferes to prevent these regular thieves from

exposure and justice. It is not, however, our business to step in between the biter and the bitten. If those who are concerned are ashamed to drive the wolves from their premises, let the wolves take such liberties as they please with the sheep ; let them even fall upon the shepherds, till your own persons and property come under their fangs. All in good time !

The gaming in Groonya's house gradually increased, and the company became more numerous. It is a true saying that what is gained by injustice does not last. Groonya and I gave no thought to calculation, and accordingly knew no bounds to our desires. Light comes, light goes. Our gambling establishment became notorious, and we were obliged to admit into our partnership some of the most skilful adepts, to prevent them from disturbing us ; and while Groonya and I squandered our money on dress, furniture, equipages, horses, dinners, and suppers, our colleagues plucked one another, and lost among their own fraternity what they had gained by fraud from others. Besides, card-table swindlers are seldom or never good domestic characters, or modest and quiet members of society. In wine, in riot, and debauchery, they endeavour to forget their degradation, to stifle the voice of conscience, and to cover their meanness with a cloak of riches and luxury. Quiet and solitude are preliminary torments to a guilty mind.

Unfortunately, in the human animal, distinction of breed is not always accompanied with superior endowments ; and throughout the world it is proverbial that every family has a misbegotten member. In our swind-

ling copartnery there were two sprigs of nobility—Prince Plootolensky and Count Tonkovóreen. The first had drawn back from an advantageous match, had given up his good connections, and left the service, and now led a debauched life, appeared always in public as if he was half tipsy, and broke through all decorum by his extravagant behaviour. He was still in the prime of life, and might have sat to a painter for the representative of a desperate robber. His red tumid face, overgrown with immense whiskers, expressed daring and intemperance; his eyes were always full and strained with blood like those of a hyæna; his pouting lips opened only to eat, drink, and growl. Count Tonkovóreen was an elderly man: he had gone through fire and water, had acquired and spent several fortunes, and, being all his life on the worst terms with conscience, he at last selected, in preference to every other line of life, the profession of a card-table swindler. He had every vice, and only one quality in common with honest men—intrepidity. But, as he made use of that quality for nothing but mischief, he acquired among his fraternity the name of *the brave corsair*. Count Tonkovóreen lived in a showy luxurious style, gave elegant dinners, and gay *soirees*, and fleeced at his own house not only green-horns, but adepts in the art. Zaráyzeen admitted these two worthies into partnership, from fear lest they should murder him—at the same time as a counterpoise to balance or check their preponderance, he selected two of the deepest and most notorious plebeian rascals, named Oodáveetch and Yádeen.

Oodáveetch, a man of middle years, of a sallow complexion and little figure, was deep as a demon. He spent his time mostly among the merchants, and was besides a money-lender. Among rich merchants it is reckoned a mark of *bon ton* to squander money in the company of friends, and they pride themselves upon their expenditure, the same as in more refined circles they pride themselves upon their penetration, punning, and address. Every rich merchant reckons it a duty to spend some days of merry-making in the course of the year; and the publicans, strumpets, and card-table swindlers anxiously lay in wait for the coming round of these days, to avail themselves of the stupefaction of the senses in which the rich merchant indulges, in order to lighten him of his superfluous burden. The card-table swindlers are besides in the habit of keeping up a friendly intercourse with young merchants' sons, who begin to squander even in their parent's life-time. Oodáveetch lent money at high interest, traded in bills, and fleeced at play his mercantile friends who resorted to his house, because they found there all the gratifications of debauchery. Yádeen, besides his natural sense, was tolerably polished in his manners, had read much, spoke fluently and agreeably, kept up an acquaintance with *litterati* who were not aware of his profession, with actors, and with people in general who had pretensions to wit. In his own house he carried on play on a small scale, and darted, as the saying is, on his prey upon the wing, when he chanced to see a green-horn in the circle of his acquaintances. One thing alone astonished me, to wit, how these rascals

could find people so simple as to put any trust in them, when nature had stamped them so evidently with the seal of reprobation. At the first sight of all these adventurers, I read in their faces the whole of their hellish propensities. I believe, that an evil mind is expressed in the physiognomy. Unbelieving readers ! look only in the face of the first card-table swindler, or the first hypocrite whom you meet, and be convinced !

This was the company in which I was condemned to live, through my blind attachment to Groonya, who lulled my conscience with her caresses and kind words, and stupified my reason with her betwitching arguments. Time slipped away, and almost a year had elapsed since I began to share in the booty of my swindling confederates. One day, when there was no playing at our house, Groonya sent me on an errand to Oodaveetch, to concert measures with him what to do with Zaráyzeen who had begun to cheat us through thick and thin. At Oodaveetch's house I found Prince Plootolensky, Count Tonkovóreen, Yadeen, two other professors, and upwards of a dozen of merchants, amongst whom were some rich long-beards. They were all in high glee, and had just returned from a holiday-excursion which they had made to some taverns out of town. Footmen were carrying about Champagne and Madeira ; gipsy-women half tipsy, and gipsy-men quite tipsy, were strutting about the rooms ; the merchants were ranting and entering into friendly explanations with one another, and reciting their old complaints : females of a certain description

were peeping slyly through a half-open door of a back-room : the gamblers in the throng were whispering and winking to one another : a one-eyed music-grinder was working lustily at an organ in the anti-chamber. I made a stop, looked around me, and immediately conjectured that this freak would end in something of a graver sort. Oodaveetch came up to me, gave me a significant hint, took me into a dark corridore, and in an under-tone told me to behave myself discreetly, for that there was a weighty matter preparing, in which I should receive a share of the spoil if I promised to tell no one, particularly gamblers, of what had happened. I promised to be silent, chiefly out of curiosity, and we returned into the rooms. Oodaveetch in the mean time grew livelier, and set himself to play the part of a cordial landlord. He went through all the guests, one by one, kissing and embracing them, and bawling out loudly : " Gentlemen ! why, you are grown dull : are you wearied, or what ails you ? Hey : Champagne ! Away with the glasses and give us our great-grandfathers' *stowps* ! " * Ivan Merkooleetch, drink if you please : Semen Patrickéyeetch, Phoma Nazareetch, drink, brothers ! Here, Paphnooteetch, thou funny fellow, a truce to thy nonsense. Wine. Bring it hither ! Isn't it true that it is good stuff ? I ordered it myself from Petersburg from Boiseaunet. Now Steshka, sing something more sprightly : organist, play Ivan Merkooleetch's favourite ! And you, ye husseys, Masha,

* *Stowp* signifies the same thing in Russian as in Scotch.

Vaseeleessa, Parasha, dance some famous gipsey dance to tickle the gentlemen's fancies!" While Oodaveetch was talking, at one time with the merchants, at another time with the gipseys, the wine ran in torrents, and the other gamblers also plied the guests with kisses, embraces and entreaties. When all their heads were pretty light, Ivan Merkooleetch, a rich merchant with a most respectable beard, the father of a family, a man who at home lived all the year round on cabbage-soup, and buck-wheat porridge, drank nothing but quass and bitters, higgled for a few kopeeks with his shopmen, and clung to a difference of a rouble in bargaining, as a question of life and death; while in taverns he would finish whole cases of Champagne, and in his drunkenness play away tens of thousands: Ivan Merkooleetch for whom Oodaveetch had such a regard, came up to him, tapped him familiarly on the shoulder and said: "What is the meaning of all this nonsense? let us have a little *bank*,* Cleem Yegóreetch!" "I am afraid," replied Oodaveetch; "for I know, you, Ivan Merkooleetch, are a desperate player, and sweep away the bank in a twinkling. With such rogues as you we must be on our guard: did not I hear that you gained at *gorka* sixteen thousand roubles from Seedor Seedorreetch?" "And what is the harm of that! I gain and I lose: none of thy foolery now, Cleem Yegoreveetch, but give us a little bank." "I shall do so, provided it be in a small way!" said Oodaveetch with

* A general term for faro and other similar games of chance.

a wry face. "No, brother, I will have none of your small stakes." "I see I can make nothing of thee; I shall throw thee a matter of ten thousand," said Oodaveetch, and ordered the tables to be produced.

The gamblers were immediately on their legs. They could not conceal their joy, and their eagerness was quite visible. Oodaveetch laid down the money, and proceeded to deal. But before he took the cards into his hands, Yadeen called out: "Wine, wine, Champagne!" They brought in some bottles of wine, and Yadeen himself took upon him to help the guests who sat at the card-table, while those who did not play were drawn under different pretences into other rooms where Prince Plootolsky, Count Tonkovóreen and other gamblers proposed to them to take a drive by way of fun. The merchants jumped at the proposal, and at the opportunity afforded them of merry-making with Counts and Princes, and with one accord they all set off. Yadeen and Oodaveetch again applied themselves to serve the guests with wine, and I soon perceived that they were completely besotted: they played their cards without any discernment, drew them at improper times, and mechanically followed the directions of Oodaveetch who scored against them whatever he chose, with his own hands took their pocket-books out of their pockets, helped himself to their money, dealt all at once two cards to each, and in a word, treated them like irrational creatures. The drunkenness appeared to me a strange sight, but still more strange was the effrontery of Oodaveetch, who

openly plundered his guests while they sat nodding at the card-table. One of the gamblers, who probably thought that I had also been invited to assist in carrying the manœuvre into execution, took me into another room, and said : " Really that Oodaveetch is a devil incarnate, and no man ! He has given them an infusion of the thorn-apple to drink, but has taken care not to let a drop of it touch his mustachios. He has emptied their pocket-books without the smallest trouble, and, besides, scored a thousand against every one of them, while these asses have been neither playing nor beaten ! He is an arch-rogue, there can be no doubt ! "

At this moment Prince Plootolensky and Count Tonkovóreen came into the room. " Is the business finished yet ? " asked the Prince. " Finished ; " replied my companion. " That is right, but for our part, we have had hard work to get rid of those d—d shopkeepers—they wished to come here to supper—order the gate to be shut and nobody to be admitted within the court-yard. Let them be told that Cleem Yegóroveetch has gone to the governor's to spend the evening, and that there is nobody in the house. You know that we have no more occasion for these jackasses, when the game is already bagged." In the mean time Oodáveetch did not leave the spot, but kept watch over the senseless *ponteurs* as a serpent does over its prey ; and as soon as the gamblers observed that the intoxicated guests began to move upon their chairs, and that the sleepiness and delirium were passing away, Prince Plootolensky and Count Tonkovóreen sat down

at the table, and began intentionally to punt. "Now, how have our affairs turned?" said Ivan Merkooleetch, rubbing his eyes and scratching his forehead. "There was such a buzz and confusion got up all of a sudden in my head, that I could not keep myself awake. Let us reckon up now." "Here stands against you twenty-three thousand three hundred and twenty-seven roubles and a half," said Oodáveetch coolly. "How so?" exclaimed the astounded merchant. "Why, because it is so. You lost all your ready money, and when you had nothing to pay with, you ordered it to be marked against you—I would trust you though it were for a million, and so I obeyed you." "Lost my ready money!" exclaimed the merchant, laying hold of his pocket-book: "There were seventeen thousand roubles here!" "I did not count how much there was," replied Oodáveetch coolly. In the mean time the other *ponteurs* also rubbed their eyes, began to count up, and were quite astonished that all their pocket-books were empty, besides, to see large sums marked against each of them. One tea-merchant, a young man, out of whose pocket-book Oodáveetch had taken ten thousand roubles, grew quite desperate, cried, and fell into a passion, saying that he would have to drown himself if he could not pay a bill which became due the next day. Oodáveetch continued cool, but when Ivan Merkooleetch and the others began to sing in the same key, and to insist that the debt should be cancelled as they did not recollect upon having contracted it, then Prince Plootolensky and Count Tonkovóreen came forward to play that part in the farce for which their

talents so well adapted them. "How durst thou presume to say before such an honourable company that thou dost not recollect the debt which thou hast contracted? Are we not all witnesses? Are we not all ready to swear to the fact? We will teach thee better manners, thou low reptile, and squeeze thy soul out of thy body before we part with thee." The other gamblers also all united in blustering and bullying, and, at this moment, a troop of footmen and gipsies appeared at the doors. The merchants lost courage and lowered their tone. Peace was restored—notaries were sent for, but luckily they were already in waiting in the anti-chamber. Ivan Merkooleetch and his companions gave their bills: Oodáveetch gave the tea-merchant a loan of ten thousand roubles, but took his bill for twenty thousand, and every thing went on sweetly. Supper was served up, and the guests, from pure vexation, ate and drank to excess, and some of them, among the rest Ivan Merkooleetch, stopped all night, quite comfortable, after having consigned their money and bills to oblivion. I received for neither one thing nor another four thousand roubles, and again passed my word not to make any mention of the transaction.

Meloveeden had written to me after his departure from Moscow in search of his wife: up to that time his endeavours had been unsuccessful. Not receiving any letters from him for more than half a year, I grew anxious about the fate of my friend. On returning home from Oodáveetch's, to my greatest joy, I found a large packet from Meloveeden. He informed me

that, at last, he had found his Petronella. I shall here communicate to my readers Meloveeden's letter at full length.

“ Like the knight of the rueful countenance, I wandered through Poland in search of the place to which my wife had retired. By means of the all-knowing Jews, I understood that she had taken up her residence in the neighbourhood of Cracow, but could not find out the actual spot. Chance, as usually happens, favoured me more than my own endeavours. Petronella had assumed the calling of a ‘sister of mercy,’ and in order to make amends for the sins of her youth, she devoted herself as a living sacrifice to suffering humanity : she waited upon the sick in an hospital. Thou art aware that the ‘sisters of mercy’ do not take upon themselves the monastic vows, and can leave their calling when they please ; but it cost me a great deal of trouble to persuade her to return with me into the world which she had renounced. It was only the undoubted proofs of my love to her, evidenced by the wandering life to which I had given myself up in search of her, that induced Petronella to go along with me. She was extremely glad when she heard of thy change of condition, and sends up her prayers to the Most High for thy prosperity, in return for all which thou hast done for me. Of course she is much changed, but, though her youth is gone, she has not lost her beauty. Her giddiness has quite disappeared, and she has now become rigid towards herself and condescending towards others, contrary to the usual practice of women, who are wont to be

guided by vanity after they have reformed themselves in all other respects. Thou surely wishest to know what has become of Gologordoffsky and his family. My father-in-law, by living above his income, by continually incurring fresh debts without paying the old ones, and by following the counsels of the Jew-farmer in his trading operations, was obliged at last to declare himself bankrupt. Thou knowest that in Old Poland the aristocracy were the legislators for the whole kingdom ; as a natural consequence of which, every thing was contrived for their own benefit. What in the world could be fairer for all parties, than to sell the property of a bankrupt to the highest bidder, and to apply the proceeds arising from the sale towards the payment of the creditors ? In order that the owners of property might not contract debts to a greater amount than they had the means of discharging, what could be juster than that all property should be valued, and every debt entered in a public register on the security of that property ? In that case the creditors who did not chuse to run blind risks, would lose nothing but the interest of their money. But, notwithstanding the number of wise men whom Poland has produced, and the excellent laws which they framed, so far as regarded the general policy of the state ; yet, on questions relating to the debts of the gentry, the levying of taxes, and other pecuniary matters, a foolish, perverse *veto* checked all attempts to reform the system. My father-in-law having become bankrupt, declared an *exdivisio* (sequestration) or division of the property among the creditors, as prescribed by the

laws of Lithuania. The creditors chose among themselves judges or arbiters from among the neighbouring gentry, allowing my father-in-law his legal prerogative of choosing judges also on his side. In addition to this, a chancery was formed of some *regents* or secretaries, and clerks, and each side appointed an advocate for itself. The property was put under the controul of this court, but only upon paper, and the actual management intrusted to my mother-in-law, who, for the dowry which she had brought into the family, and for bills granted in her favour on the eve of the bankruptcy, was a considerable creditor of her husband's. At an appointed time, the judges, regents, and advocates, assembled together, along with their servants and dogs. They had all to be fed and entertained at the expense of the property belonging to the creditors. The business was kept up for a considerable length of time, as the judges and lawyers found it very convenient to live at the expense of others in pleasant company. Mr. Gologordoffsky, in order to ingratiate himself with the judges, entertained them sumptuously, (at the expense of the creditors,) invited to the *exdivisio* all his relations who had good-looking daughters, gave balls, hunts, and lived in better style than ever. The judges played at cards, flirted with the ladies, fell in love, got drunk, danced; but the *chanceries* in the meantime proceeded at a snail's pace, urged on, however, by the lawyers who began to be impatient for their fees. At length, after the lapse of two years and a half, the *exdivisio* was brought to a conclusion. The estate was divided

upon the plan, in a manner resembling the squares upon a chess-board, and the lots assigned to the creditors in proportion to their claims. My mother-in-law got the very best part, which was worth thrice as much as her dower. Other creditors of rank, and relations of Mr. Gologordoffsky, had lots with peasants assigned them, while the creditors who happened to be poor and absent, were put off with a dividend of moor-land, brush-wood, and sandy wastes, at a higher valuation than the fields of India, covered with cinnamon, cloves, and sugar-canes. My father-in-law was much richer after the *exdivisio* than he had been before it, as he received back the very best part of the property; and with barren land, and at a small sacrifice, discharged debts which exceeded twice the value of his whole estate. The creditors too, after paying the judges for their attendance, the salaries of the chancery-clerks, the advocates, the land-measurers, and the government-dues, were quite ruined. Some of them prudently withdrew their claims, in order to be freed from the expences, which were twice as much as the whole amount of the debts.

“Gologordoffsky did not live long after this for him fortunate occurrence, but died of a bilious fever brought on in consequence of an affront from the *government-marshal*, whose grandfather was a poor *Shlyakhteetch*, and had served under Gologordoffsky's grandfather: this gentleman took his seat higher than Mr. Gologordoffsky in the church, and was invited to dine with the governor, an honour not vouchsafed to my father-in-law. His last words were addressed to the Jew-

farmer : " Josel," says he, " the day of judgment is at hand ! Time was, when the thunder did not dare to strike a Polish *Shlyakhteetch*, but now a Mongrel-Tartar puppy of a governor thinks it beneath him to invite to his table the pink of *Shlyakhteetches*, the first-born of the Gologordoffskys !" After saying this, he smiled proudly, and surrendered his soul to God.

" Fortunately there chanced to come to Byalo-Russia on business, a country-gentleman from the government of Grodno, Podkomoree Potchteevsky. He fell in love with my sister-in-law Cecilia, and, as the Potchteevsky family happened to be as illustrious and widely spread in the governments of Grodno and Wilna as that of the Gologordoffskys in Byalo-Russia, my mother-in-law consented to give him her daughter. In the meantime my brothers-in-law finished their education in the Jesuits' College, where at least one good thing, a spirit of economy, was instilled into their minds. My mother-in-law left the management of her estate to her sons, and removed herself to her daughter's residence in the government of Grodno.

" After learning all these particulars, we set off from Cracow direct to Mr. Potchteevsky's. Before arriving at the manor-house, we halted at a *kartchma* in order to arrange our dress. To my astonishment, the *kartchma* was a decent house with good clean rooms for travellers. There was no Jew in the *kartchma* : it was kept by a Christian, a cabinet-maker, who occupied one of the rooms for his work-shop, while his wife managed the house and traded in spirits. " How is it that there is no Jew here ?" asked I of the land-

lord. "The *Báreen** has driven out the Jews from all his estates, and forbidden them not only to trade in spirits, but even to live in his villages. Owing to that, in the course of ten years, our peasants are so improved, that all the neighbouring proprietors envy us." "Your *báreen* probably takes pleasure in the welfare of his peasants." "He is a father and no *báreen*. In ten years, since he has had the property in his hands, he has improved all the fields, the peasants' as well as his own, increased the live-stock, given the peasants horses, re-built their houses, established a school for the children, and takes more care of the health and condition of his peasants than of his own—he is loved and respected by all."

"I was glad to hear such favourable accounts of my brother-in-law, and we impatiently hurried to his house. I need not describe to you the joy of my Petronella at meeting with her mother and sister, who supposed her to be lost. Cecilia was happy with her noble and wise husband; she had by this time two sons, charming boys, and was big with her third child. From the time of our first meeting we became friends of Potchteevsky. He had been educated in the university of Wilna, and on leaving it, had received the degree of doctor in philosophy, had made the tour of Europe, and, on his return home, resolved to employ himself in the improvement of his estate, which had been wretchedly managed by the curators during his nonage. Potchteevsky speaks Russian tolerably, loves in general all

* The Russian word for master, as applied to the owners of land and serfs.

the Slavonic dialects, and regards all the Slavonic tribes as blood relations, all Slavonians as brothers, who ought to love one another and unite their endeavours to educate their countrymen, and to raise the standard of literature, that they may occupy a respectable place in the republic of art and science. I need not detail the arrangements about Potchteevsky's house; I may merely say that he had neither law-agent nor commissary, nor Jew-confident; that he had neither debts nor law-suits: in a word, the whole establishment was quite the reverse of the late Mr. Gologordoffsky's.

"After living for a couple of months with Potchteevsky, I received news from Kieff, that Avdotya Ivanovna, impatiently waiting for my uncle's death, in order to reap the fruits of his testament, fell at last into a consumption brought on by an excessive fit of screaming, and was seized by the clutches of death before my uncle, who is left quite in despair because he has nobody to plague him. It is said that Avdotya Ivanovna's daughter Leeza, is hastening with her husband to Kieff, to take her mother's place. By my friend's advice I am setting off for Kieff, and shall use my endeavours to reconcile myself with my uncle. I know not how it will end—but, in the meantime, fare you well, and write me to Kieff."

CHAPTER IX.

A young mad-cap.—An amateur of the drama.—Ruin in a robbers' den.—Calamity.—Groonya's flight.--Honesty in wolf's clothing, or do not judge by appearances.—A selfish man.

THE young people of *haut ton* in Moscow resorted in great numbers on a shooting excursion to the country-seat of a young candidate for bankruptcy, who, after exhausting his ingenuity on all sorts of town extravagance, turned his attention to the same object in the country. He erected a theatre, set on foot a great hunting establishment, and opened in his house a sort of gratis-tavern. To this shooting party ladies were also invited, relations of the landlord along with their acquaintances, and Aneta, Meloveeden's cousin, obliged me to accompany her to assist in the merry-making. My absence was not to be longer than a week, and, after taking leave of Groonya, I set off.

We passed the time very pleasantly. The landlord, Falalay Gloopáshkeen never intermitted his endeavours to play the part of an English *lord*. His wooden house was luxuriously fitted up with the most fashionable furniture, with pictures, statues, and bronzes. His stable contained more than a hundred English horses, and he had upwards of three hundred hounds of different breeds. Among his attendants he had a number of foreigners—English, Germans, and French.

For a companion he kept a Frenchman, under the denomination of a *litterateur*, who was his private secretary : to an Englishman he paid a high salary merely to talk with him, and perfect him in the pronunciation of the English language. An Italian, an old rogue, lived with him as a sort of friend. He enjoyed the reputation of being a connoisseur of painting, antiques, and music. The Italian traded in the most paltry Italian pictures, mosaics, counterfeit antiques, and along with that was a usurer and messenger of gallantry. A German librarian served for a small salary, being attracted by his love for catalogues, of which there was a number in the library. Gloopáshkeen bought a whole company of players from an amateur of the drama, by name Kharakhóreen, who had squandered away his property but consoled himself for the loss by performing in all private theatres and managing his old troop. Gloopáshkeen's orchestra was also composed of serfs whom he had collected from different private orchestras. In the house there were about five hundred inmates fed at the expence of Gloopáshkeen, and serving merely for his diversion. It was difficult to keep from laughing at seeing the grave air of the beardless fool, who, fancying himself a great man, spoke about every thing in a decided tone ; pronounced his opinions upon politics in sentiments borrowed from his English companion ; delivered lectures upon literature in the words of his Frenchman, and spoke upon the arts under the prompting of the Italian. Many of the guests, without having the least idea of the subjects on which he spoke,

and knowing the sciences merely by name, looked upon him as a miracle of wisdom, and, while they enjoyed the luxuries of his table, loudly proclaimed that Russia would be happy if Gloopáshkeen were minister. This was also his own opinion, and, in expectation of the first dignities of the empire, he enrolled himself in the college of foreign affairs as a translator from the Russian into the French. To give him his due, his superiors had reason to be pleased with him; for he performed his duty extremely well. A poor student was hired to translate for him the Russian papers into literal French, while his French companion dressed them up with all the elegancies of the French idiom. In this way Gloopáshkeen, fulfilling exactly the commissions of government, had a full right to claim rewards and promotion, and not without grounds expected to rise to an elevated rank. He is not the only one who has succeeded in attaining rewards by means of the brains and labours of others, nor the only one who has passed for a man of business and a great politician, by repeating the words of his companion: ‘*Sic vos non vobis,*’ &c.

In the morning we went a hunting, after that we dined; in the afternoon we were present at the performance of a tragedy and ballet, under the superintendence of Kharakhóreen; and lastly, we danced, played cards, and supped. It was impossible to feel ennui, for Kharakhóreen’s performance afforded matter for laughing all day long. He was persuaded that there was not in the whole world a better declaimer than himself; made frightful grimaces, roared in his

declamation like a wounded bear, and strutted about and brandished his arms like a madman. In order to accustom himself to wear the dress of ancient heroes and foreign marquisses, he always put on his theatrical costume in the morning of the day of performance, rouged his face, and spoke with all, even with the servants, in a theatrical tone. It was related of him, that, having equipped himself one day to play in a private theatre out of town, he set out thither in the morning in his dramatic costume. At the barrier his carriage was stopped, as usual, in order to inquire his rank and surname. Kharakhóreen declared his real name, but the sergeant on guard thinking he was showing false colours, sent him to the nearest police-office, and the inspector upon duty without listening to his reply consigned him to the lunatic hospital, where poor Kharakhóreen was detained till his friends gave security to the authorities, and convinced them that he was only a fool and not a madman. Kharakhóreen drilled all his troop into his own declamatory exercise, and owing to that, the spectators were horrified in comedies, and could not keep from laughing in tragedies. His ballets consisted in a sort of hopping, which was only endurable when the female dancers were possessed of other attractions. I would have remained longer in Gloopáshkeen's house, but unfortunately I was lodged in the same room as Kharakhóreen, and he tormented me so by reading to me his dissertations on the drama, that I was completely worried, and the sixth day made my escape from him to Moscow.

On arriving at home, I learned from Pétroff that a police officer had called every day for some days, and asked whether I was at home, as he wanted to speak with me about some affair or other. I ordered tea, and had scarcely emptied my first cup, when Pétroff informed me that the police-officer was there and asked permission to come in. He entered modestly and made a very respectful bow. Although his physiognomy was not expressive, a certain simplicity and kindness of manner prepossessed me in his favour. His uniform appeared as worn as the pavement, his hat seemed a relic of the last century, and the handle of his sword looked blue. He made a bow to me and said: "My duty is at present connected with yours, and I have been employed to trouble you by asking you some questions, to which you must answer immediately." "What is this which has happened?" asked I with uneasiness. "Be cool," replied the police-officer: "let us sit down and we will explain it together." An ink-glass was brought, and I immediately replied to the following questions:—

"How long is it since the College-secretary Vejeeghen became acquainted with the actress Agraphéna Stepánovna Preemankeen?" "Since my childhood. I became acquainted with her in the life-time of her mother, the Titular Counsellor's widow, Shtoseen." "How long is it since Vejeeghen became acquainted with Prince Plootolensky, Count Tonkovóreen, Zaráyzeen, Oodáveetch, and Yádeen?" "I became acquainted with them in Preemankeen's house, a year and a half ago." "Did Vejeeghen know of the in-

tentions of the aforesaid persons to swindle at play the two brothers Dooreendeen, who have lately come of age and borrowed three hundred thousand roubles in the *Opekoonsky Sovyet*?" * "I did not know, and this is the first time that I heard of this intention and of the Dooreendeens." "Was Vejeeghen in the house of the aforesaid Preemankeen when the gaming took place between the above-named persons, when they intoxicated the Dooreendeens with some poisonous drug, and when a squabble occurred in which Zaráyzeen lost his left eye, Yádeen's nose was broken, Prince Plootolensky's right whisker plucked away, Oodáveetch's forehead cut with a bottle, and Count Tonkovóreen's forefinger knocked off, while the Dooreendeens received dangerous wounds in the head and breast, in consequence of which they are now dying?" "I was not, but was residing at the country-seat of Mr. Gloopáshkeen, and am only just returned after six day's absence." "Does Vejeeghen know the place of concealment of the aforesaid Preemankeen, who is accused by all the above-named persons of having allured the said Dooreendeens to her house, of having intoxicated them with some drug, and of having invited the aforesaid Plootolensky, Tonkovóreen, Zaráyzeen, Oodáveetch, and Yádeen to plunder the Dooreendeens, and of having excited them to quarrel when the Dooreendeens were unwilling to pay the money which they had lost?" At these words the pen fell out of my hands. "How! Groonya concealed herself! Groonya left me!" ex-

* The name of the bank belonging to the Foundling-hospital.

claimed I in despair, and threw myself on the sofa, covering my face with my hands.—“Agraphéna Stepanovna, calling herself Preemankeen, has pleased to quit Moscow, it is not known whither,” replied the police-officer coolly : “and, as from the examination of the servants it appeared that you pleased every day to make repeated visits to the aforesaid Agraphéna Stepanovna, and lived on the most intimate footing with her, the authorities have thought proper to collect evidence from you, whether you know anything of this occurrence and of the place to which the above-named Preemankeen has retired.” “I know nothing of it, and you see in what a condition I find myself since I heard of the misfortune of Preemankeen, whom I love, whom I wished to marry— — and now — — I am deprived of all !” “I have already mentioned in the protocol the stupor into which you fell on hearing the news, and regarded that as a proof that you know nothing of what has happened,” said the police-officer. While he was writing and putting his papers in order, I grew a little cooler, considering that, in this unfortunate proceeding, it was better for Groonya that she had escaped from the clutches of the police, and consoled myself with the thought that perhaps this occurrence would incline her to follow my advice and turn into honest courses. I hoped to find her, to exculpate her by means of my friends : in a word, my grief suddenly changed into joy. “Mr. officer,” said I, “I am ready to confirm my evidence with my oath, and declare to you frankly that it was only my absence which saved me from this scrape. If I had been in

Moscow at the time, it is ten to one but I would have been implicated. Take your breath now, drink a cup of tea with me, and tell me more particularly the details of this ugly occurrence." "You appear to me to be a worthy open-hearted man," said the police officer, "and therefore I shall tell you my mind freely, to which I am the more inclined, as the neighbours all speak well of you, and in the precognitions which have taken place, you have been universally described as well behaved, generous and peaceable. Your servant Pétroff declares that there is not a better gentleman in all Moscow." "Enough, without farther preamble! Tell me what you know, satisfy my curiosity, and I will be obliged to you." The police officer rose from his seat, went up to the door on his tiptoes, looked into the other room, then returned without making the least noise, sat down, and after looking around him on every side, began to speak in an under tone. "I am a little man, a *Kvartálny Nádzeeratl* (inspector of a quarter) a mute executer of the will of my superiors, but, thank God, I am neither deaf nor blind; I have some little brains, and a clear conscience. What makes you stretch your neck so? Why do you eye me so strangely, Ivan Ivanoveetch? Yes, sir, I have a clear conscience, and owing to that"— — On this the *Kvartálny Nádzeeratl* pointed to his threadbare uniform and his faded-black hat, and continued: "The Tchastnee Preestaf (overseer of the ward) knew that in Preemankeen's house gambling was carried on to a great extent and in a dishonest manner, and that it was a rendezvous for the principal card-table swind-

lers of Moscow. But they are his tributary serfs whom a magistrate protects as a good landholder his industrious peasants, and so notwithstanding my reports the affair took its own course. The squabble with the Dooreendeens would have been passed over in silence if there had not been a complaint lodged by their grandfather, a man in power, who, by means of money and threats, obtained from Zaráyzeen a confession of every thing. Then Oodáveetch proposed to his companions and to the police-overseer to lay all the blame on A-graphéna Stepánovna, on the grounds that a new place might be opened for carrying on their gaming operations, while they themselves by these means would escape. In the meantime they gave Preemankeen a quiet hint to conceal herself, and the affair assumed another aspect. But, as it was necessary without delay to discover the guilty person, and inflict a suitable punishment to satisfy the Dooreendeens' grandfather, they contrived to hook in the old rogue Zaráyzeen, who was banished the town, and Yádeen locked up in the guard-house. The rest were not touched, and their *hetman* Oodáveetch remains safe and sound, of course, only for a season. Providence sooner or later will punish the culprit.

"Ivan Ivanoveetch ! I know all. Listen to good advice—disentangle yourself from those d——d gamblers, who will before long draw you into perdition. Forget the deceitful enchantress Preemankeen, who caressed you while at the same time she loved a Frenchman, an itinerant agent for a French manufacturer, and went off with him to Paris." "Enough, enough !

That will finish me !” Wounded self-esteem and cheated love raised a strong commotion within my breast.— Fortunately I was able to weep, and that lightened my heart a little. “ And so Preemankeen has set off for Paris ?” asked I ——. “ It is true,” replied the Nádzeeratl : “ I was told all by her servant Catherine, the sweetheart of our sergeant. She says that Agraphéna Stepánovna loves you much, very much, but that you are too sentimental, and torment her with your jealousy,—on the contrary, the little Frenchman is cheerful, and so far from jealous that he delights to hear of the conquests of Agraphéna Stepánovna. She preferred the Frenchman, but, when she set off with him, wept bitterly for you.” I felt as if I was on the rack at this relation, but my natural pride and some remains of wholesome reason kept up my strength. After a short silence, I collected my breath and said : “ Why did you put these questions to me, when you were aware that I had no hand in this affair of the Dooreendeens, and did not know of Preemankeen’s flight ?” “ That, sir, was for form’s sake. The overseer of our ward, to shew his zeal and endeavours to discover the truth, entangled it with as many *names* as possible, and collected a great variety of evidence. In proportion to the number of persons examined, and in proportion to the bulk of the papers, the merit of the service performed will be appreciated.”

I wished not to remain alone, and asked the Nádzeeratl to sup with me. He consented, and till such time as Petroff had the table covered, I strided up and down the rooms, reflecting upon my condition, and

upon the repeated deceit of Groonya, who had twice brought me into misfortune. On the first occasion, I lost my liberty from my love to her ; now I had lost my capital, and all but lost my character—had fallen into the society of robbers, and been a partaker or at least a confidant of their villany. Whence such sacrifices ?—from love to a faithless woman, unworthy of such a noble elevated feeling ! Now, thought I, it is time to become a man, and to prove that the noble blood of the Meeloslavskys runs in my veins. I will begin to extinguish my passions, and my first flame, my love to Groonya.

I considered well, and on this occasion followed the dictates of my reason, because Groonya was not beside me. I will not answer for what might have happened had she been beside me—had Groonya, during my struggle with my passions, appeared in all the splendour of her beauty, with her enchanting eloquence, with her tender caresses. But fortunately Groonya was at a distance, and I triumphed over myself. After weeping, raging, fretting, abusing the world, people in general, and women in particular, to tell the truth, without any cause upon this occasion, I went up to the Nádzeeratl, and striking my hand upon his, or, properly speaking, upon his greasy glove, I said : “ I thank you for your good advice—henceforth I am another man.”

Not being able myself to eat, I was amused with the appetite of the worthy Nádzeeratl. For my diversion, I begged him to tell me in what way he had fallen into the police—for what cause he had served so long with-

out promotion, and by what means his conscience, swimming upon such a stormy sea, had escaped shipwreck?" Arkheep Arkheepetch took a draught of wine, hemmed, coughed, arranged his stock and began his narrative:—"Say what you will, but it is my firm belief that a man cannot avoid what is decreed at his birth. My father was the house-steward of a noble lady, Lukeria Semenovna Poredkeen, and, for his faithful services, received his freedom along with all his family. My father had two sons—we lost our mother during our infancy. There was no one to look after us, and we did as we liked. My greatest pleasure during my childhood consisted in playing tricks to the policemen: I threw stones at them from holes and corners, caught them by the leg in a loop when they passed our gate in the evening, threw water upon them and the like. My hatred towards them was occasioned by their having arrested my father one day, and on his daring to complain, beating him and taking his money from him, and all for another man's fault. For my childish revenge I have to atone by a life-long course of policely drudgery, and it is likely to be my fate to die at last of hunger in a *syezshee dvór*.*

"My father hired a deacon to teach us reading and writing: but, as the deacon himself knew but little, he could not teach us a great deal: besides, every one has his talent, and mine did not chance to be for let-

* The name of the house belonging to the police in each ward, consisting of dwelling apartments, a lock-up-room, police office, work-house, and watch-tower—inhabited by policemen, firemen, a doctor, midwife, &c. &c.

ters. To read and write I know : I can make a shift to tell my story—at least there are people who hear me with satisfaction—but when it comes to set it down upon paper, I am puzzled. I knock about like a fish amongst ice : no, it will not come out of my pen ! It is no great harm that I am at variance with dots and dashes, strokes and hair-strokes ; our men of business themselves are no great wizards in that respect ; but my chief vexation is that I cannot write as I think, or as I speak. If one could write with the tongue in place of the pen, it is probable that we should have more writers and also more geniuses.

“ I did not wish to remain in our lady’s service, and did not know what to do with myself after the death of my father, who was an honest, God-fearing man, and did not leave us a kopeek, though he managed his mistress’s house for thirty years. My oldest brother entered the service as a clerk in the *Grazhdanskaya Palata* (civil court) and soon pushed his way so well, that he passed for a clever fellow. I procured for myself a small situation in the city-provision-magazine, under the patronage of the mayor, who knew my late father. In this place I had scarcely my daily bread. Fortunately the oldest son of our former lady, who had served in the army, was appointed police-master of Moscow. I paid my respects to him, told him of my unfortunate condition, and begged his patronage—he enrolled me in his chancery, and employed me on particular commissions.

“ *Sergius Semenoveetch Poredkeen* was an honest, truth-loving man, a wisher and doer of good where-

ever he had it in his power ; he even sought for opportunities to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures. But, though a man had seven spans to his forehead, though he had a heart as good as ever beat, and as big as a watch-box, he could do nothing without efficient instruments, and would be so crossed by his understrappers in all his endeavours, that he would worry himself to death, as was the case with the worthy Sergey Semenovetch. “ Arkheepetch,” said my commander to me, “ I am persuaded that thou art an honest man. Look about thee, and discover as far as possible all irregularities, and thy prayer shall not be lost on God, nor thy service on the Tzar. Recollect that the calling of police-officer, of preserver of the peace and public safety, is a respectable calling; if those who exercise it act according to law and conscience. Fear no one—I am thy protection !”

“ I soon became thoroughly acquainted with police-business and began to act. I discovered that Sergey Semenovetch’s secretary took bribes from the officers, from the farmers of the revenue, from the merchants, as if they were for his master. We surprised the secretary in the night-time, examined his *commodes*, found money, receipts from the Deposit-Bank, and his correspondence with various individuals. He was examined, and as he could neither shew nor prove how he had come by so much money in so short a time, his effects were handed over to the commissioners of public inspection, and the secretary himself dismissed the service. I discovered that one officer was in the practice of making intentional delays in executions

for debt, and in confiscations of property decreed by courts of law, that he was in the habit of beating the porters of those houses, the landlords of which gave him no gratuity, that he took money from shopkeepers, publicans, and butchers, for permission to deal in spoiled wares and provisions. The officer was discarded. I discovered that in one place thieves were allowed to live, and only some of them delivered to justice when any affair became too flagrant, and when it was necessary to make a show of activity in searching for goods stolen from people of note. The officer was put upon his trial, the thieves were caught and sent to Siberia. I procured evidence that soldiers were admitted into drinking-shops, and only those publicans brought before the police, against whom the gaugers of the *vodky-farmers* had a personal grudge. The abuse was corrected, and the guilty punished. I found out the harbourers of thieves, the receivers of stolen goods, the new-face-makers to stolen goods; discovered the connections of thieves at large with those in prison, and by those means cut off what was a rich source of revenue to many. At last I resolved on a desperate venture. The worthy Sergey Semenoveetch was not free from human weaknesses. He had a female friend unworthy of his noble heart. She took money from petitioners, and during moments of weakness, drew from my worthy commander his consent to her requests, of course always representing such matters in the most favourable light. I collected undoubted evidence of the falseness and selfishness of this cunning woman, and

laid them before Sergey Semenoveetch. Poor man ! He even wept—but conquered his passion and cast off the worthless barterer of his good name. In three years he promoted me to the rank of Titular Counsellor, gave me this cross, and made me overseer of the very best ward in the city.

“ You may easily guess that I was looked upon by one and all as a scare-crow, and that they would have given any thing to get rid of me. They attempted by different means to work my ruin, but as long as Sergey Semenoveetch was alive, all their endeavours were fruitless. I made honesty the rule of my conduct, took no advantages ; and, as my salary was insufficient for my maintenance, as I had to keep horses, and had to be always neatly dressed, Sergey Semenoveetch allowed me to avail myself of the voluntary offerings of grateful people, when I discovered stolen property, made an execution for debt, or found out concealed property of a debtor : and, besides, he gave me for my own use confiscated contraband goods, fines for carelessness, and the like. Sergey Semenoveetch, as I have already told you, could not long maintain the struggle with abuses. The ardour of his disposition, the want of rest, the labour and annoyance broke up his constitution. He died, and with him was buried my good fortune.

“ His successor was also a well-meaning man, but he had his own favourites, whose advantage consisted in my ruin. He did not know me, but lent an ear to my enemies. Means were taken to undermine me. A whole gang of thieves was let loose

upon my ward, dead bodies were thrown into it, which had been found in other places ; they loaded me with false accusations, set a correspondence on foot, and entangled me with quibbles and chicaneries. It ended with taking my ward from me, and giving me for Christ's sake the place of Kvartálny Nadzeeratl, on condition that I should see no farther than my nose, should stop my ears, and, shortening my tongue, should keep it within my teeth. In this way I have lived fifteen years, from day to day, and from hand to mouth, fed by the kindness of good people, and hardly possessing the means to cover my nakedness, at a time when but yesterday the wife of our Tchastnee Preestaf, who three years ago could not afford to buy snuff, was wearing brilliants worth twelve thousand roubles, and a cashmere shawl which cost two thousand five hundred. ' Have patience, Cossack, you will be Hetman yet ! '*

" During this time my brother has become a great and rich man : he holds the first situation under a distinguished functionary in Petersburg, and manages all his affairs. I wrote him, begging him to allow me to come to him to Petersburg, and to procure me some small post by the influence of his commander. He answered me in a letter which I always carry in my pocket-book, having nothing else to put into it, and the letter itself being really amusing—Here it is."

Arkheep Arkheepetch took the letter out of his faded pocket-book, and gave it me to read. It ran as

* A Russian proverb and popular song.

follows :—" Dear Brother ! Thou wishest to come to me to Petersburg, and to put up at my house. That is impossible. I have so much ado with my large family, and in the distinguished circle of my acquaintances, that I cannot spare thee a kopeek. It is true my quarters are found me by government, and, to outward appearance, seem pretty extensive, but they are so distributed, that I have not a single corner for thee, my dear brother. One room is my cabinet, another my wife's cabinet, the third my bedroom, the fourth my parlour, in the fifth my daughters sleep, in the sixth my two sons, the seventh is my daughter's teaching-room, the eighth my sons' teaching-room, the ninth my saloon, the tenth my dining-room, in the eleventh lives our French governess, in the twelfth our French governor, in the thirteenth the chambermaids, in the fourteenth my two clerks, in the fifteenth my footmen, the sixteenth is my wardrobe, the seventeenth is occupied for the folding up of papers, the eighteenth a small private room for speaking with petitioners alone. Down stairs is the servants' room, the coachmen's room, the pantries, the store-rooms ; in a word, there is not an empty place sufficient to stow a cat, much less thee, my dear brother. At table, every day, there are eight of us belonging to the house ; besides that, my secretary, the officer upon duty, two young gentlemen entrusted to my care to be introduced into society, and in addition to this I must every day have three or four vacant covers to be in readiness in case any strangers should drop in. The times are now expensive, in-

comes are low, and although it would give me pleasure to divide with thee my last crumb, my circumstances will not afford it, my dear brother ! My children are educated in the modern fashion, they speak a variety of languages, are acquainted with people of rank and wealth, and you may easily guess that the appearance of a poor uncle, a retired police-officer, would not be very agreeable to them, and might even hurt them in the common estimation, my dear brother ! With regard to a place, which thou wishest me to procure thee by means of my patron and benefactor, I will tell thee candidly, my dear brother, that I cannot be of any service to thee in that respect. My benefactor does not like to be asked for any thing, still less can he bear to be asked for any one. He distributes his favours by the drop, and so I must keep all I can for myself and children, as a good father of a family, and a man of right principles. Remain in Moscow, my dear brother, and put all thy trust in God, whom I shall never cease to entreat to preserve thee in his holy keeping, and to confer upon thee all manner of earthly blessings.

“ Thy sincere well-wisher,

“ And tenderly-loving brother,

“ PANTELEIMON.”

“ P.S.—Do not trouble thyself with writing me, my dear brother ! Postage is dear now-a-days, and I am so full of business that I cannot always answer thee. Of thy valuable health I shall inform myself by people coming from Moscow. Our common friends blame thee for letting slip the opportunity which thou hadst

for acquiring a competency, and besides this they say thou hast made thyself many enemies : this may be prejudicial to me, if they learn that I take thy part. So I beg thee, dear brother, tell no one that we are brothers ; but, if thou art asked, say that we are merely of the same surname. I am persuaded that, for the love which thou bearest to me, thou wilt do me this favour, till an opportunity occurs by which I can be of service to thee."

"A worthy brother !" exclaimed I, returning the letter to Arkheepetch who replaced it in his pocket-book with a smile, and prepared to leave me. I went to my cabinet, and taking out of my bureau a hundred roubles, returned into the room, and begged him to accept of it as from a friend. He refused, in the following words :—" If I had not come to you upon business, I would have taken the money, but now I cannot. It is not according to the fitness of things, and your present would have the appearance of a bribe." I pressed the worthy Arkheepetch to my heart, and congratulated him with the assurance that his honesty one time or other would meet its reward. Arkheepetch pointed upwards with his fore-finger, and said, " There is my hope !" He wiped off the tears with his hand, and left the room.

CHAPTER X.

Lesson in the Science of Matrimony.—Ditto in Lawyers' Arithmetic.—A rich Farmer of the Excise.—A Merchant's Feast.—His Family.—Private Theatricals.

ON visiting my mother in the nunnery, I was quite astonished to perceive that she knew of what had been passing in Groonya's house—of my intimacy with her, and even of my own behaviour. With tears she entreated me to be more careful in my connexions, and to choose for my maintenance some line of life not so dangerous as a partnership with gamblers. I promised to reform, and promised sincerely. Unable to repress my curiosity, I asked her how in her secluded state she could come to hear of my conduct and of my connexion with Groonya? “News fly through the air like a cloud, my dear Vanya,” said my mother: “our elders are in the practice of visiting pious women who live in the town; we have also visitors here; thus it happens that the news of the town find ways and means to scale the nunnery-walls.” I was quite stunned to hear that the rumour of Groonya's proceedings, in which my name was mentioned, had become a subject of town-talk. With uneasy feelings I left my mother, and drove to the house of a grandee retired from service, whose son then held a high situation in Petersburg, and, on that account, the whole of Moscow paid their

court to him. With fear and trembling, I entered the saloon. The company assembled looked towards me with inquisitive eyes, whispered amongst themselves, and seemed to be astonished at my appearance. One of my friends took me aside and asked what had happened, and if it was true that I had fallen into a disagreeable scrape, in consequence of my connexion with the runaway actress? I answered in a decided tone, that I knew absolutely nothing about the affair, that I had been the whole week at Gloopáshkeen's, and on my return to town heard by-the-by that there had been a squabble among gamblers at Preemankeen's, and that she had by stealth quitted Moscow. I intentionally raised my voice, and soon had a crowd about me, amongst whom, with an artificial smile, I related the proceeding in Groonya's house, enlivening the description with puns, and representing the affair in a laughable point of view. It was soon spread through the whole assembly that I was not in the least implicated, and all doubts with regard to me were removed. The ladies pronounced me innocent, and the youths even regretted that they had suspected me of being intimately connected with Groonya. Cousin Aneta alone did not put faith in my justification, and finding an opportunity to speak with me privately, said, in a friendly tone :—" Dear Vejeeghen ! I know all, and would forgive you all, but for God's sake be careful and do not entangle yourself with actresses. With your person and with your accomplishments, you may cut a figure in the highest circles. Do not degrade yourself. The ladies have done all for you which you could wish :

they forgive you for all, except for intriguing out of the pale of *ton*. Recollect this, and amend your ways!"

I began now to consider how I was to maintain myself in the world, by honest means. Having never engaged in business, and being only nominally in the service, I had no hope of being soon able to support myself by written labour. Besides, in my rank, it was out of the question to expect a large salary, and to bribes I had an insuperable aversion. There still remained in my possession some thousand roubles, and a few valuables. I began to live very modestly, dismissed all my servants, sold my rich furniture and my carriage, hired a small lodging, retained in my service Petroff alone, and never was at home to my friends who came for the purpose of drawing me into the whirlpool of amusements and expenses. I dined out every day, played for small stakes, danced every evening, acted the amiable, and passed the time, but could never contrive what to do with myself.

At this time one of my friends, a ruined nobleman, married the *elevée* of a rich man. This event excited in my mind a thought to mend, or, properly speaking, to make my fortune by marrying. But where to seek for a bride? There was the rub. With all my self-esteem I could not dare to look for a partner in any of those families among which birth and connexions are the current measures of value for a bridegroom. Rich *elevées* are very scarce—wealthy widows, a little advanced in years, in the second place, find husbands principally from calculations of ambition. New nobility seeks alliances with ancient families, and *vice versa*.

Upon the whole, I thought it most advisable to make my market in the mercantile line ; but having no acquaintances in that calling, I did not know how to set about it. One day, returning home, contrary to my usual practice, at six o'clock in the evening, I met at the door an old woman dressed very decently in a jacket, with a silk handkerchief about her head.—“ Whom do you want, goody ? ” “ Your man Petroff, my good master—I am his gossip.” “ And what art thou ? ” asked I, from curiosity. “ A midwife, my son, and, if need be, a *svákha*.”* “ Very well ! Go in, goody, to Petroff, and after that I want to speak a word with thee.”

In half an hour I ordered the old woman to come into my cabinet. “ What sort of people dost thou bring together ? ” “ Whoever pleases, sir ; merchants, officers, and also gentry.” “ Dost thou know of any rich brides at present ? ” “ To be sure I do ! We have plenty of wares, had we only purchasers.” “ ‘ The proof of the pudding’s in the eating of it,’ but there is no harm in asking: if thou findest me a rich *kooptcheékha*,* I will fill thy lap with gold, my old woman.” “ At your service, sir, master ; I have in my hands just now a brace of *kooptcheékhass* ; and how pretty, how dashing, how learned they are ! They speak in all the German lingos, dance all manner of outlandish jigs, dress like dolls ! ” — — — “ Good, very good—but what portion have they ? ” asked I the talkative old

* A matrimonial broker.

† The females belonging to a merchant’s family are known by the general term of ‘ *kooptcheékha*.’

woman. "A hundred thousand a piece, ready money ; and fifty thousand in effects, silver, gold, pearls, coloured stones, and all sorts of finery." "Incomparable ! How do they call these respectable young ladies, and their honourable parents ?" "The father, Pampheel Merkooloveetch Moshneen, was born in our part of the country, and is enrolled among the burgeses of Moscow. The mother, Matrena Evdokeemovna, an excellent housewife, God bless her—she has eight children—two sons, already tall striplings, and three little boys ; three daughters, two of them marriageable, and the third a girl of fifteen." "What are the daughters' names ?" "The oldest Aquilina Pampheelovna, the second Vaseleesa Pampheelovna, and the youngest Lukeria Pampheelovna." "Which of them is the prettiest ?" "The fullest and rosiest of all is Aquilina Pampheelovna ; Vaseleesa is a little inferior ; and the third is a thin creature, but she is only a girl yet." "How am I to break the ice ?" "I will speak about thee to the misses, whisper in Matrena Evdokeemovna's ear, cry thee up to the aunts ; and thou, master, must scrape an acquaintance with Pampheel Merkooloveetch : he is a good-hearted man, and likes all sorts of fun. A power of gentry assembles at his house ; and he has a deal of business in government-contracts." "Very well, here are ten roubles to thee for the first good word in my behalf—go, with God to speed thee, and hasten back with welcome tidings—good bye !"

When the *svakha* went away, I without joke set about considering how I should concoct this match. A hundred thousand, ready money, and a connexion

with a rich government-contractor, I reckoned the greatest attainable happiness in my existing condition. One difficulty stood in my way : how to introduce myself into the house ? In the circle of my friends I did not expect to find a guide to Moshneen's house, and, besides that, I wished to avoid revealing to them my intentions. I recollected, however, that I had seen frequently at Groonya's, at the card-table, a secretary on whom at that time we cracked our jokes, saying, that the inky spots were visible on his money. One day, being *croupier*, I observed that he bent an extra corner, and not choosing to bring him into an unpleasant scrape, I kept silence, and, after the game was over, made him sensible of it. The secretary promised to serve me on the first opportunity, and so I resolved to drive to his house, and learn how I might get myself introduced to Moshneen, who was doubtless known by all the legal fraternity.

My Petroff knew his lodgings, so I immediately set off thither. He lived in a small, neat, wooden house, in a distant part of the town. I intentionally hired a coach and four. My vehicle had scarcely stopped at the door, when I immediately perceived a movement in the house : a footman opened the folding doors with a bow, and conducted me into a saloon, where I was met by the secretary, dressed in a stuff surtout, red boots, and a coloured handkerchief about his neck. Out of respect he took off his nightcap and spectacles, and begged me to enter his cabinet, a shabby-looking hole, in which there were neither books, nor papers, nor writing materials. "How can I serve you ?" said the

secretary, in a patronizing but at the same time a respectful tone. "Don't trouble yourself," replied I—I have no earthly business—but only wish to know if you are not acquainted with Pampheel Merkooloveetch Moshneen, or with any of his intimate friends?" "And what is the nature of your business, may I make free to ask?" said the secretary. "I have commercial views." "I understand," said the secretary, with a knowing smile—"right, left!" "You are mistaken: since the time that I succeeded to my fortune, I have entirely abjured play," said I, wiping my face with my handkerchief, to prevent the wily secretary from reading in my face the falsehood of what I told with my tongue. "Ah, you have come to a great fortune, and don't play more? That is right, that is quite right. But for myself, like a d—d fool, I cannot curb that infernal passion! With Moshneen I am hand and glove: I have a small affair of his at present before me: he promised to call to-day, for a private consultation, and I will introduce you without more ado. But do me the kindness to wait here a little, till I speak to a petitioner whom you did not observe in the corner of the parlour. To keep you from wearying, I will give you an excellent book to look at—the works of Theodore Amen." The secretary took the book out of a side-room, and, at the same time, a bundle of papers, with which he proceeded to the petitioner.

They spoke rather low—but, as far as I could make it out, the secretary stated different objections to the petitioner, to which he replied in rather a soft tone.

At last they grew angry, quarrelled, softened down again, and I only overheard ‘*one—two—three*,’ and, at last, ‘*forty*’ : in a minute the counting began afresh, from unity to forty, with which the process terminated. “Your cause is perfectly right !” said the secretary—“You may go home now, and put your mind at ease !” The petitioner made his bow, and the secretary came back to me. We conversed for a quarter of an hour on the unfortunate proceeding at Groonya’s, of her flight, &c. when, on a sudden, the servant came into the room, and announced that another petitioner had arrived. The secretary went to him, and the same comedy was acted over again. At first the objections, after that the dispute, the convincing, the begging—lastly, an arithmetical series of forty, thrice told, and after that the dismissing compliment of the secretary : “Put your mind at ease—your cause is perfectly right.” When the secretary came back to me, I could not help asking who that second petitioner was who seemed to be in such a passion ? “That is the opponent of the other man whom you saw here !” replied the secretary. “Fortunate adversaries !” said I, with a smile, “who are both in the right !” “And so you heard ?”—“Yes, I only heard your assurance of the justice of each of their causes.” “That is merely a common form of judicial compliment,” said the secretary ; “but who is actually right and who is wrong, we will see, after the words *heard* and *ordered*.” At this time a calash drove up to the door. “Here is our respected Pampheel Merkooloveetch !” exclaimed the secretary, and ran to meet him.

I was rather disconcerted, not knowing how to commence this acquaintance, and how to behave myself towards the rich farmer. If I put on high airs, I was afraid that he would keep at a distance ; if on the contrary I behaved unassumingly, I feared that I would lower myself in the eyes of a man who probably would not trouble himself to discover my inward worth. Like a general, who on the field of battle displays his active powers, but in the cabinet feels his irresolution and short-sightedness, I waited the appearance of Moshneen, to form my plan of attack and commence active operations. He remained alone with the secretary for about half an hour, and at last the secretary called me into the saloon. I saw before me a tall, plain old man with a long hoary beard, fresh rosy cheeks, smooth and shining, wearing a long blue surtout, and in the *tout ensemble* of his dress uniting the old Russian and modern German fashions. He smiled very kindly, and made a few half-bows before the secretary introduced me. "I recommend my worthy friend, Mr. Vejeeghen," said the Secretary ; "a man who is wealthy, wise, and well-connected : he wishes to become acquainted with you, Pampheel Merkooloveetch, knowing that you keep agreeable company." "Very glad, Sir !" replied Moshneen, continuing his half-bows ; "We are liked and favoured by many persons of rank, and are glad to do our best." I cannot recollect what I muttered forth to him concerning his celebrity, honourable dealing, *savoir vivre*, &c. only Moshneen was very well pleased with me. "I say, can't you do me the favour of being with me to-morrow, without

ceremony, along with Anteep Treephónoveetch?" said Moshneen, pointing to the secretary. "To-morrow is my oldest daughter's name's-day. Do have the kindness to come and take potluck with us." I thanked him for the invitation, and Moshneen took his leave, moving backwards towards the door, repeating his half-bows, and saying over and over again, "*We wish you good bye; thank you kindly; don't trouble,*"--and the like. After he had gone, says the secretary, "Here is an acquaintance for you! You see that I have found an opportunity to do you a good turn for your discreetness at Agraphéna Stepanovna's." "I promise you to be still more discreet on the subject of your arithmetic with petitioners!" said I, with a smile. "That gives me no concern," replied the secretary, cheerfully; "'For what is the pike in the lake, but to keep the small fish awake!'"* Every body knows that we live by our labours."—"But the notoriety!" - - - "Notoriety!" repeated the secretary; "that is a devilish deal more serviceable, than for the public to be in ignorance or doubt of the motives which guide us. A petitioner knows at least what spring to touch, and that is a great relief. Let them cry out, speak, sing, and make farces about it! I never miss going to the performance of '*Yábeda, the honest lawyer,*' and always prick up my ears and cock my eye when the actor who represents the lawyer, bending himself like a bow no more elastic, sings,

"Ah, what a time is this—
Bribes we no more may take!"

* Russian proverb.

"That, Sir, is a bauble, a child's play, but things take their own course for all that."

After joining in the laugh along with the secretary, I left him, previously appointing to go together next day to dine at Moshneen's. I asked him whether it would not be necessary to make a call, in the first place ; or whether, after the billeting fashion, I should march straight up to the table without asking any questions. "Among merchants no attention is paid to that," said the secretary : "their families are accustomed to see strange faces, and people there come and go as they are wanted, or follow in the regular train of business. Among them, acquaintance begins with a dinner, and generally ends when a man who is of no more use to them, asks the loan of money." "I am obliged to you for the information : farewell till to-morrow !"

Next day I sat at home all morning, thinking upon the past and the future, and found myself in a strange condition of mind ; I reviewed, one by one, and criticised all the steps which I had taken. In the first place, I condemned myself for making use of unfair means to acquire money ; in the second place, for the inconsiderateness with which I had squandered what I had acquired. I resolved to lead a quiet life ; on marrying a *kooptchéekha*, to enter into business for the purpose of increasing my capital, and to become a decent man. As I would keep aloof from the great world and from my fashionable acquaintances, I thought that I would be able to avoid all superfluous expenses and indulgences which are pardonable, and sometimes ne-

cessary to people of the higher ranks, but are ridiculous in merchants. My wife, born and bred among people of simple tastes, would doubtless have no conception of those refined cravings of a pampered nature which arise within the higher circles, to torment before their time the possessors of wealth and rank. A quiet life, the management of the house, the education of her children, and innocent pleasures, are the obvious lot of the woman who has no extensive acquaintance. I resolved to give up all thoughts of ambition, to keep free from intrigue, and to become a man of business. There is no doubt but the condition of an honest merchant whose desires are moderate, is very enviable. The affair is decided: I will be a merchant, I will give up all my unprofitable connexions in the great world: if necessary, I will even remove to take up my residence in another town, for instance in Astrakhan and — — but I must first get married, and take up my hundred thousand.

Engaged in thinking and castle-building, I did not perceive how the time slipped away. In the midst of this I was interrupted by the clock, which warned me that it was time to dress. Arraying myself in the most foppish style, I went to the place appointed for meeting with the secretary, and from thence straight to Moshneen's house.

Up to the moment at which I am writing, I cannot conceive what pleasure the master of a house can have in inviting to dinner people who differ as far as east from west, in their education, worldly circumstances, habits of life, and casts of thought! In the first place,

he heaps up for himself a mass of trouble, and frequently of dissatisfaction ; and, in the second place, he confers a disagreeable favour upon his guests. The landlord must screw his features into a different pitch towards each of them, and the guest for his part, does not know what tone to assume, nor with what degree of communicativeness to carry on the conversation. All this I experienced that day, at Moshneen's. I had scarcely entered the saloon, when I might fancy myself at the Makárieff fair. Officers civil and military, merchants of all nations, in different costumes, of all degrees from the highest guild down to the lowest broker ; females, some in the tiptop of Parisian fashion, others in blond and lace-caps, others with silk handkerchiefs about their heads, some in jackets ; in a word, a confusion of tongues, a real *divertissement* ! I ran my eye over a crowd of guests whispering and bawling about the weather, and fortunately did not see one face which I knew : this gave me courage : I confess, I was afraid of meeting with some of my old card-table acquaintances. The secretary asked a footman where the landlord and landlady were : we were taken into a huge dining-room. There Pampheel Merkooloveetch, with his better half, was hard at work, the sweat upon his brow. Footmen were taking wine out of baskets, the butler was giving his verdict upon the quality of each, the landlord was separating the one from the other, disposing the best wines in the places of honour, while the home-made madeira and port were put to the other end of the table for the use of the more common guests. The landlady, a healthy-

looking fat woman, of about fifty years of age, dressed in the German fashion, with a silk *Kosseenka** about her head, was arranging the dessert. They apologised to me for being found in the midst of household labours, and begged me to be without ceremony as if I were at home. We returned to the company, and I begged the secretary to introduce me to the landlord's children. The two sons of Moshneen, dressed in the latest fashion, complimented me in French phrases, and endeavoured to shew themselves clever, and to sport an easy freedom : in a word, to act the part of people of *haut ton*. It was evident that they copied all the gestures of the young dandies of the great world, not as they are exhibited in drawing-rooms, but in the theatres, on the boulevards, at the public promenades, and the *corps de gardes* ; owing to this, their demeanour at first sight appeared too familiar and even impudent. They had already left the mercantile denomination, and entered the career of the civil service, that is to say, the shopmen, clerks, and footmen, styled them, 'your honour.' I endeavoured, from our first interview, to conciliate their good graces, by accommodating myself to their ideas, and begged them, '*as is usual in the great world,*' to present me to their sisters. The word, '*great world,*' tickled their vanity, and taking me by the arm, they led me into the drawing-room, where there was a large as-

* Russian head-dress, worn by the wives of Russian merchants, and the lower ranks of females who are not peasants : it is composed of the half square of a silk handkerchief, tied on the crown of the head, like a night-cap.

sembly of young ladies, gaudily dressed. Some of them were seated on chairs and on a sofa, others were whispering to each other beside the windows, and some were walking up and down the room. The brothers led me up to their sisters, who fortunately happened to be all in the same place, and introduced me, muttering some words in French. The two oldest were arrayed in the latest, and at the same time the showiest fashion; the youngest was plainly dressed. They made me a curtsy in exact conformity to the rules of the dancing-school, and the oldest sister in the name of the rest answered me in French: "*Charmée de faire votre connaissance!*" If fatness and whiteness are to be taken as the standards for beauty, as in the east, and particularly in China, the oldest Miss Moshneen might have passed for the greatest beauty in Peking, and the second for the next: only it is a pity that the Chinese have such a predilection for small feet; with us in the north that is very uncommon, and was none of the peculiarities of the two oldest Misses Moshneen. But the youngest was charming, in every sense of the word. From the colour on the face of the oldest sister, and a certain involuntary agitation, I conjectured that the wily *svakha* had already broken the ice with her. It was observable at the same time that all the guests peeped at me through their eyelashes, and then stared in each others faces, and whispered together. Considering it improper to continue the conversation with one young lady in the midst of a circle of silent observers, I made my bow, and withdrew with my new friends into the other room.

We were forthwith summoned to dinner, and I was seated between the two young gentlemen, of course at the respectable end of the table. Any sort of general conversation was out of the question during dinner. Officers talked together about promotions and new evolutions; civilians, about new ukazes and changes in the ministry and public offices; dabblers in law, about crimes and punishments; merchants, about the course of exchange, fresh bankruptcies, and the prices of the day. Some of the mercantile youth, and among the rest the young Moshneens, displayed their knowledge of horses, fashionable surtouts and vests, the theatre, female singers and dancers. However, amidst all this, none of the guests neglected the more serious part of the business: empty bottles were continually being changed for full ones, by a signal from the landlord, who, sitting at the end of the table, like a Jupiter, by the mere play of his eyebrows, put in motion the whole pocular system. The voices of the ladies were not audible, except in giving brief answers to questions put now and then by gentlemen. My neighbours emptied bottles without ceasing, ordered the servants to hand us the best wine, and by the time that the toasts began, the whole company was already *ree*.* Half-tipsey footmen ran here and there with bottles, as if they were distracted, spilling the wine upon the guests, and making a prodigious fuss. The drinking

* Gaiety and delirium are both implied in this Scotch term, the introduction of which the English reader will have the kindness to pardon, as it expresses exactly the sense of the Russian phrase, '*na veschye*.'

of healths was commenced. In the first place the young lady's, whose name's-day they were assembled to celebrate; after that, the health of the parents, children, relations, respectable guests individually, the whole company, &c. The fair sex in the meantime were quietly occupied with the dessert. The young ladies pecked the berries like as many little birds, and though they were already crammed to repletion, they continued to swallow fruits and confections, in small mouthfuls, with every appearance of satisfaction. Although quite disposed for merriment, I could not join in that of the young Moshneens, at the expense of their parents. At every awkwardness of papa and mamma, the dear little children laughed, concealing their faces with their table-napkins, and winking across the table to their oldest sisters. The sons called their father the scoopish old clerk, and their mother the counter, and even cracked their jokes aloud in French. The worthy parents, who did not understand a word of what they said, seemed quite pleased to hear their children speaking a foreign language. I was drawn, in spite of myself, to reflect upon the worthlessness of that system of education, which, exclusively cultivating outward shew, and leaving moral principle out of sight, makes us look down upon the condition in which we were born, and, by implanting false notions of self-importance, stifles in the heart the feelings of nature.

After dinner some of the guests sat down to boston and whist, the ladies amused themselves with tittle-tattle and sweetmeats, while the youth, including myself,

removed their sitting to the apartments of the young Moshneens, where they smoked tobacco, drank Champagne, and talked upon subjects which it would not be proper to mention here. In an hour and a half the elder brother requested his guests to return into the galerooms, informing them that there would be a performance of a French comedy, for a surprise to their *papakin* and *mammakin* (so he called his father and mother.) Chairs were placed in the dining-room: in the *buffet* were assembled the domestic performers, that is to say, the Moshneen family, and some friends of the young ladies. At the end of the room were fixed moveable side-scenes, and a curtain of carpets stitched together was hung up. In place of an orchestra, the youngest daughter's music-master played wretchedly enough upon the piano-forte. When all the guests were seated, according to their ranks, Mr. and Mrs. Moshneen took their places in the first row of arm-chairs, seating between them the French governor of the younger children, to translate what was to be said, and explain every thing which should occur. The same governor, Monsieur Furet, was the author of the drama about to be performed, under the title of '*The liberal Parents, or the good Children.*' Although the title of itself was quite enough, nevertheless there was no want of applause, but the clapping of hands was repeated at every word, or at least at every couplet. The substance of the piece was as follows:—A rich merchant spares no expense in the education and outfit of his children; allows his sons money for treating their friends, for equipages, &c.; extends the same

munificence to his daughters for dresses ; and, besides that, takes them to all the promenades, theatres, and masquerades, and give balls and fêtes at home. In the last act, his daughters are married to princes, counts, and generals ; while his sons attain the highest ranks in the service. The sons and sons-in-law, out of gratitude, join together in procuring a title of nobility for their father, who is at last complimented with the style of ‘ *Right honourable.*’ It was a sight worth seeing to behold the extacy of the worthy couple during the performance of the piece. The governor translated faithfully every phrase and every couplet which reflected honour on the parents, and tears of tenderness ran in torrents down their cheeks. Notwithstanding that the two oldest sons, heated with wine, bungled in the acting, that the two oldest daughters knew nothing at all of the parts which they had to perform, and that the voice of the prompter drowned the speeches of the actors, who, besides that, sang quite out of tune, the performance went through gloriously, and attained the object in view, that is to say, it convinced Moshneen that children should not be grudged money to supply their extravagance, as it all tends to the elevation of the family. The performance was concluded with dancing—the misses Moshneen danced a fandango, the tamboureen, and shawl-dance, while the younger sons skipped like monkeys. The china cups and saucers, and chandeliers, shook and jingled in sweet accordance with the light fantastic movements of the two elder sisters, but the youngest enchanted all with her playing, dancing, singing, and still more by

her beauty and modesty. I was in truth deeply smitten with her. But knowing that in merchants' houses the daughters must go off according to their age, I saw no hope of receiving her hand, unless it might be by the forcible intervention of her brothers. That day I succeeded in forming a very close friendship with them, and, on my going away, invited them to breakfast with me next morning.

CHAPTER XI.

My matrimonial scheme miscarries—One Letter from the Kirg-heezian steppe, and another from Paris.—I join the army.—War.—Distinction.—Return to Moscow.

It would be tedious to describe all that I went through in order to ingratiate myself with the young Moshneens. In their company continually for some months, and wishing to accommodate myself to their manner of life, the improvement which I underwent was little better than the transition out of the frying-pan into the fire. The greatest pleasure of rich merchants' sons who did not follow their father's profession, consisted in making excursions to taverns out of town, where they indulged without reserve in drinking, rioting, and debauchery, broke windows, and bottles, and glasses, quarrelled with clerks belonging to public offices, and with poor German artisans—and, to conclude the scene, kicked up rows, and made their peace with the police-officers. The Moshneens treated me like a friend and a brother, and made me the confidant of all their secrets. I learned in what manner they took up debt on their father's account—how they imposed upon their mother, and got money from her under pretence of making presents to their superior officers in the service; how they purloined the contents of the *commode*, by means of a false key, when there happened

to be a quantity of money in it, and the like. At last I disclosed to them my love for their youngest sister, and they engaged to forward the object of my wishes. The simple girl agreed to take me for her husband, and entered with eagerness into a correspondence through the medium of her brothers. Pampheel Merkooloveetch and his full-weighted spouse were also well inclined towards me on the strength of my nobility and fifteen hundred souls, and seemed quite desirous that I should make a good *beginning*, that is to say, should marry their oldest daughter. Only one obstacle remained to be overcome, to wit, to persuade the parents to make the matrimonial *beginning* with the third daughter ; when, on a sudden, one day, all my plans, and the accumulated hopes of many months, evaporated like smoke.

The wily secretary saw through my deceit, and rightly suspected that my fortune was all fudge. Being acquainted with a lawyer, a native of Byalo-Russia, who had been turned out of court for chicanery, the secretary learned from him, that in the whole of Byalo-Russia there was not a single noble family of the name of Vejeeghen. Over a tumbler of punch, when he was in a communicative humour, he related this to old Moshneen, and drew my picture at the same time in the darkest colours. He was joined by Ivan Merkooloveetch, one of the sufferers at Oodaveetch's entertainment, where I had been—and he took his oath that I was a gambling swindler. Old Moshneen warned his sons not to associate with me. But, although I had been actually as bad as I was described to the old

gentleman, I would still have been the best of friends with the young Moshneens. They informed me of all, and advised me to lay before their father the proofs of my nobility, and title-deeds of my estate. Of course, nothing remained to be done but to give up visiting Moshneen, and bid adieu to all hopes of possessing either bride or dowry. I could not help thinking that this was a righteous judgment upon me for connecting myself with gamblers, and patiently submitted to my fate. A man who is deeply affected by a loss or failure, gives himself up to despair only in cases where the flame of the ruling passion is suppressed, without being totally extinguished; and in misfortunes where the reason and not the heart is the party concerned, it is easy to find consolation. After weighing all the advantages and disadvantages of the projected marriage, I congratulated myself that I had escaped from being connected with the young Moshneens—gave up receiving them at my house, and soon got quite rid of them.

One day I received two letters, one from Orenburg, the other from Paris. My old medical attendant, the Baxa Temeer Boolak, wrote me from the Kirgheeziain *steppe* as follows :—

“ To the highly-respected, illustrious, brave Meerza, Ivan Vejeeghen, from his faithful friend, the Baxa Temeer Boolak, compliments, wishes of health and happiness !

“ Since the time that thou quittedst our blessed *steppe*, Mahomet, sitting in the ninth heaven, has been wroth with the distinguished tribe of Baganálee Keetchak, and his sacred mare El Borak has whisked her

tail against the *aool*, which was prospering under the wise government of the brave Arsalan Sultan. Presages of misfortune in the heavens and on the earth obliged us to be on our guard : the moon concealed her forehead in the skirt of the sacred garment of the prophet, and her figure was as obscure as that of an antelope in the mist. Insects were found in the entrails of sheep, and Arsalan Sultan's favourite mare brought forth a dead foal with two heads. I foretold calamity, but Arsalan Sultan having imbibed the doctrines of bookish infidelity in Russia, put no faith either in my visions or my prophecies, nor would he listen to the counsels of wisdom, and unite with the great Horde to escape from the deadly feud of the two powerful tribes of Tcheezlek and Dert Kareek, whose chief had fallen by thy powerful arm, O brave Meerza, Ivan Vejeeghen ! These two tribes having called to their assistance all their allies, fell upon us unexpectedly, and did not conquer but cut off our best horsemen. The manly and hitherto invincible Sultan Arsalan, sharper than the sword of the prophet, the flower of the *steppes*, fell in the ranks of the enemy like a wolf in the midst of a flock of sheep, as a judgment for despising the wise counsels of the Mollahs, and disbelieving the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of the Baxa. Our flocks and herds became a prey to the enemy, our *aools* were plundered, our fair maidens led away into captivity ! In the general confusion, the surviving warriors saved themselves by flight, and joined the great Horde. Thy letter I received at Orenburg, at the Barter-yard, whither I had

been sent by the Khan on business of his. And so, Meerza Ivan Vejeeghen, do not expect to receive thy property, which was laid apart in the *yoort* of Arsalan Sultan himself, and fell into the hands of the spoilers along with his stores. The successor of the brave Sultan, thy friend Gayuk, is so poor that he quaffs his Koomees out of the bounty of the magnanimous Khan of the great Horde, and serves him as commander of his body-guards ! Further, the Khan has heard so much of thee, that he would be glad to see thee, and would probably give thee a respectable situation in his Horde. Fare thee well, and do not forget thy friend Temeer Boolak, who prays to God for thy prosperity, and begs him to stir up within thee a desire to return to the beauty of earthly beauties, the foretaste of Paradise—the Kirgheezyan *steppe*."

Tears flowed from my eyes at reading the news of the worthy Arsalan Sultan's end, and the misfortunes which had befallen my old comrades. My hope of receiving aid from the Kirgheezyan *steppe* was thus extinguished, and my condition became more perplexing.

The other letter was from Groonya. With a shaking hand I broke open the seal, and read it over and over again in the ebullition of various feelings. These were its contents: "My friend, dear to my heart, Vejeeghen ! thou art probably well aware of the cause which obliged me to leave Moscow and Russia. I love thee so, that I chose rather not to expose thee to misfortune, by uniting my bitter lot with thine. But it is hard for a woman to exist in the world without one of the other sex to protect her, and I chose for

this purpose, Monsieur Sans-souci, a cheerful and worthy Frenchman, who loves me as ardently — as I love thee ! It was written in his passport that he travelled with his wife ; but, as Madame Adèle remained in Russia in the capacity of governess, I occupied her place and arrived safe in Paris. Ah, my dear friend, what a city is this Paris ! Our quiet, grim Moscow, in comparison with the capital of France, is as a pond in comparison with a waterfall. During winter in our country, after twilight, all is still and empty, and nothing but the rattling of carriages reminds you that you are not in the heart of a wood. But here there is perpetual life, perpetual motion ; no day, no night, but only a change of scenery ; the natural light finding an artificial substitute. I wonder how I escaped a fit of apoplexy from extacy of delight at first seeing the Parisian *magazins de modes* ! Ah, my friend, what an alluring spectacle ! Novelties here do not make their appearance after a lapse of months or weeks, but every day, every hour, every minute. Here is the sanctuary of taste, the mount Sinai of the chosen people of fashion, the central point of all inventions. Here life is not calculated by years, but by the number of gratifications, and every one bustles about like the navigator who hurries to settle his affairs on shore when the sails of his vessel are already hoisted. Paris is the head-inn of the whole world. Here are assembled the amateurs of wisdom, of pleasure, and of happiness, from all ends of the earth ; and owing to this, every one lives here according to his taste without the least constraint, the same

as he would do in a tavern. My dear friend ! if you only saw how our ladies, who in Russia will not move a step without a convoy of a couple of robust lackeys and a coach with four horses, though it were only to cross the street, walk here alone in the most crooked lanes of Paris, in the illuminated garden of the Palais Royal, under the arcades, and go to the bathing-place in a common *fiacre* ! This *incognito* furnishes them with a thousand gratifications, which, if any one should dare to mention in their presence in Russia, he would be set down for an idiot, a brute, an impertinent fellow ! Here there are offices opened for every thing : every desire has its agents. You may buy and sell even heart and mind. Not till I came here, had I any right conception of social life. Whatever may be the refinement of our upper-circles, thou must confess, my dear friend, that the middle class still retains a great deal of the Asiatic ; and that the women, though they rule the roast there, as they do every where and even in Asia itself, are in common life kept under woful restraint by old-fashioned customs. But here every one has full freedom. Decent females resort to taverns and coffee-houses, travel alone in diligences and post-chaises, and frequently have their own connections and acquaintances concerning which their husbands know nothing at all, and care as little. Every Frenchwoman is complete mistress in her own house, while the duty of the husband is confined to out-of-door business. Foreigners are here valued not according to their rank, but according to the money which they spend, and it is the purse not

the patent which here confers the title. Your humble servant among the rest has been dubbed a princess, though not at her own expense. Refinement in amusements and pleasures is here carried to its highest pitch, and human ingenuity seems to have been exhausted in the devising of comforts. Amusements may be divided into public and private. To the first class belong the theatres, concerts, public balls, promenades, and *fêtes champêtres*. All the entertainments which in other capitals are restricted to the principal festivals, and extraordinary occasions, are of daily occurrence here, and draw always crowds of amateurs. I shall not enter upon a description of the theatres, which form the ruling passion of the French. I shall not describe all the amusements partaken of *incognito*, and am silent for this reason, because I wish that thou shouldst come to Paris thyself and taste these pleasures in reality, not merely on paper. Up to this moment I have had no time for recollection; my head has been in a continual whirl. Monsieur Sans-souci is a very good sort of a man, and does not in the least plague me with importunate love. I have made the acquaintance of some foreign ladies, and of some of my own countrymen in quest of diversion as well as myself: we lead an extremely cheerful life. Thou hast reason, my dear friend, to be proud of my love! Even in Paris I have got the name of the beautiful Russian, and if thou only saw me in my Parisian dress, thou wouldst prostrate thyself at my feet along with a dozen of lords, German princes travelling *incognito*, and our own worthy countrymen. In our country the

milliners and dress-makers know nothing about their business, and think of nothing but of getting their rags off their hands. But here they work for fame and — money. Come my friend, only leave behind in Russia thy jealousy and thy philosophy, for which there is no room here. Ask for me in the Palais royal, in the *magazin de modes*, No. 113."

From this letter I saw that misfortune had not reformed Groonya, and that giddiness and vanity still retained their wonted sway over her. I thought it would be of no avail to write any answer, knowing that my counsels would be disregarded.

In the meantime, as war broke out with Turkey, recalling to my mind the advice of my worthy Petroff, I resolved to enter the military service. I disclosed my intention to my friend Cousin Annette, who had always treated me as a brother. She applauded my resolution, and undertook to negociate for me the exchange from the civil into the military service. O all-powerful daughters of Eve, how many obligations do I owe to you in the course of my life! Cousin Annette put in motion all her female friends, aunts and cousins. Notes were written to and fro, visits made, consultations, petitions, recommendations. My superior officer, with whom I played at whist twice a week, and dined every Sunday, gave me a flaming certificate of zealous and faultless service, although I had never seen the inside of his chancery: accordingly, in the course of two months, I was translated into a corner in the very same *polk* in which my deceased father had served.

When I presented myself before cousin Annette in my full hussar costume, she sighed with admiration, and declared that I was born to the uniform. My patronesses rejoiced in the success of their application, and I almost fatigued myself to death, dancing with grateful feet the mazoorka with all their daughters and nieces. Petroff was in extacy, and tormented me with begging me to hurry off to the *polk*. Worthy Cousin Annette lent me some thousand roubles, and, after scraping together the fragments of my property, I set off for Malo-Russia where the *polk* was quartered and waiting for orders to advance.

I said nothing to my mother of my intentions, but presented myself before her in my military uniform the day before my departure. She almost fainted at the sight. I was so like my father, being in the same uniform, that my mother could not bear to look upon me. After a profusion of tears, as is usual in such cases, she gave me her blessing, and loading me with good advices, wished me success. Next day I was on the high way to Kharkoff.

The *polk* had already begun to move forward, and I came up with it on the route. When I presented myself to the Colonel, he gazed at me, clasped his hands in amazement, and said: "My God, what an astonishing likeness! If I had not been an eye-witness of the death of my friend, prince Meeloslavsky, I could not help believing that I see him now before me." He called out of the adjoining apartment the quartermaster, who had been formerly serjeant-major in my father's squadron, and asked: "Who is cornet

Vejeeghen like?" "He is a living picture of the late Prince Ivan Alexandroveetch Meeloslavsky!" exclaimed the old man, the tears streaming from his eyes. "Did you ever hear of the Prince?" asked the Colonel of me. "No;" replied I. "I know that my deceased friend was a bachelor, but it frequently happens in the world that — — — that is to say, that there are strange coincidences! I wish, my dear comrade, you may be like the Prince in mind and bravery, as well as in person, and, as I have no reason to form any contrary opinion, I give you this advice at starting: endeavour to learn as soon as possible the fronting part of the service, without which the best of men will never be a good officer. We have many raw recruits, of whom I have formed an exercising squadron, and intend to drill them on the route. I appoint you to the body-squadron, and in the meantime, in order to learn the order of the service, I place you under the commander of the exercising squadron, Captain Braveen, an old soldier, whom I advise you to love and respect like a father, for he is worthy of it."

In the army there is a prejudice against those who enter from other regiments by seniority, or, as they call it, are put over their heads. Although I was ranked as the youngest cornet, my comrades received me very coldly because I had entered from the civil service. Notwithstanding my respectful behaviour, and my endeavours to acquire the good-will of the officers, I got the nickname of the lawyer, although I swore that I had never in my life written any thing but love-letters, and hated the hooking tribe more

than I did the Turks with whom we were going to fight. There was no end to their taunts, which became more frequent and offensive, when it was seen that they put me into a passion. Captain Braveen who loved me sincerely, advised me to teach them better manners. In one week I had two duels with the sabre, and one with pistols, wounded two of my antagonists, and received myself a slight wound in the left arm. The Colonel put us all under arrest, and reprimanded us by way of punishment : as soon as I recovered, I gave my comrades a *dejeuner*, not omitting to invite my antagonists, and declared before them all, that, if any of them wished to be convinced that I never had been and never would be a lawyer, I was ready to give him sabre and pistol evidence. My comrades were pleased with this frank and bold behaviour, and amid the clashing of Champaigne-bottles and glasses, I was acknowledged to be a sterling hussar. "Veejegen," said the lieutenant who had wounded me, "thou hast washed out the ink with thy blood ; now thou art ours, and he who is against thee is against us. Give me thy hand, brother. Thou art just the lad for us."

The Colonel having called me to him, gave me a fatherly advice, saying : "I punished you as a duty which I owed to the service, but I have no reason to be dissatisfied with you for your behaviour. You were drawn into the squabble ; but now that you have entered into full communion with the old officers, avoid disputes. A good officer should shew his bravery in battle with the enemy, and not in single combat with

his friends. Captain Braveen informs me that you are sufficiently acquainted with the fronting to be able to take your place in the company. Please to present yourself to the commander of the body-squadron. I have ordered him to give you the third subdivision." I do not know if a veteran General would have been so glad on getting the command of a whole army, as I was on the present occasion. My worthy Petroff jumped for joy.

I spoke to no one of my having been in the Kirgheezian *steppe*, fearing that it might be the means of procuring me another nickname, and made no display of my abilities in horsemanship, in which I had continued to exercise myself even in Moscow, riding out of town into solitary places. I however provided myself with a hair-noose, and bought a mountain-horse in order to be ready, if an opportunity should cast up, to make a trial of my skill.

My dear readers ! If you should chance to hear the stories of cornets and ensigns concerning the plan of a campaign, military combinations, the blunders of generals, and the causes of success and miscarriage in war—listen out of civility, but believe no more than the one half, or better believe not a single syllable of what they tell you. An officer serving in front can see nothing more than what occurs before the front, and has it not in his power to judge of military plans otherwise than by hearsay, and by putting together a multiplicity of circumstances and occurrences which cannot come to his knowledge till after the campaign is over. Therefore I do not choose to enter upon military operations,

to which, besides, I am less inclined, as I have no intention to write the history of the war, but merely to represent what occurred to myself.

After crossing the Danube, our *polk* united itself to the vanguard of the main army; and, as we had taken no part in the actions which were fought previous to the crossing of the river, we joined it with our full complement, and, as it is called, fresh.

One day I was stationed with my subdivision at an outpost on the Turkish borders. It was in the month of June, but the night was piercing cold. I lay beside a little fire, wrapped up in my cloak, and waiting till Petroff should boil the tea-kettle, when, on a sudden, a hussar galloped up from the outer chain, and informed me that he heard a noise among the bushes which bordered the field on which our dragoon-sentries were posted. I immediately ordered my men to horse, and leaving them on the spot under the command of a serjeant, I advanced with two men and my comrade Petroff who never left me, to corroborate the report of the sentinel. The night was dark, thick clouds covered the moon, and a mist hung over the valley. I dismounted, put my ear to the ground, and actually heard a whispering and slight rustling among the bushes. Can that be the enemy? How is it possible to know in the dark? Before I occupied my post, I had surveyed the vicinity for a couple of versts round, and knew that on the side where the noise was heard, there was no road, and that the valley was bordered by hills which closed upon a wood. Our last patrol had discovered the enemy at a distance of thirty versts in

another direction : no attack was therefore to be anticipated from that quarter. While I was thus reasoning with myself, the moon suddenly peeped out from behind the clouds, and steel weapons gleamed among the bushes where the people were only half concealed. Judging by the eye, I concluded that there were about a hundred men there. What was to be done ? I followed the first impulse, sent a hussar to the camp to notify the appearance of the enemy, and advanced with my subdivision to attack them. We fell upon the Turks so rapidly, that they were put into confusion, fired some shots, and began to cry *amaun* (quarter) and threw down their weapons. We collected them into a body, disarmed them, fettered them with ropes, and drove them before us, covering our retreat with the half of the subdivision. One of my men who understood Tartar, questioned the officer who was made prisoner, and I learned from him that the Turks, having received a reinforcement, had advanced in order to attack us in the morning. The hundred Arnauts, whom I so fortunately took prisoners, had been sent aside on a foraging party ; but their guide, a native Bulgarian, deceived them, led them into a wood, and in the night slipped away from them. After wandering about in the wood, they stumbled upon our outpost ; and not knowing where they were, but supposing they had got into the heart of the Russian army, they lost courage, and resolved to surrender on being attacked by a party which they fancied to be very strong, as it had the hardihood to fall upon them in the night time. In this the Turks confirmed a remark made by our Co-

lonel, that he who wishes to beat them must act on the offensive ; when they are received on the defensive, they always do mischief.

I sent a patrol forward—they trotted some versts in advance, and returned saying that there was no sign of the enemy. I halted, and waited for the return of the man sent by me to the main body with accounts of my having met with the enemy. In a short time, we heard the pattering of horses' feet from the side of our camp, and there soon rode up to us a couple of hundred Don Cossácks, under the command of a volunteer of a distinguished family. He had been sent in quest of renown from Petersburg, to the army which was under the command of his second uncle. I delivered over to him the prisoners with whom he returned to the camp, and I re-occupied my post till morning.

Arriving at the *polk*, on being relieved, I received the congratulations of my worthy Colonel and comrades. "Bravo, Vejeeghen, bravo !" cried the officers—"Thou dost honour to our crack-regiment." The Colonel invited us all to breakfast, that is to say, to eat roast mutton, and empty a keg of Moldavian wine. My health was drunk, and a report was drawn up on the spot to the commander of the brigade, in which it was mentioned that I, with thirty hussars, had taken prisoners a hundred and twelve armed Turkish foot-soldiers. The Colonel, in a separate letter, begged a reward for me. My reputation was thus established through the regiment.

Pustomeyleen was the name of the volunteer who received the prisoners from me. This young man, who

had been educated by a retired French drum-major, reckoned himself a military genius, and in the society of his brother-officers was continually talking about tactics, great plans of operations, the movements of Turenne, Montecuculi, Prince Eugene, and Frederick the Great, criticising all our military movements and plans, and passing sentence upon all boldly and decisively. We sometimes made game of his universal knowledge, but more frequently paid no attention to what he said, and received him into our company merely because on bivouacs it is impossible to get rid of tiresome babblers. Pustomeyleen, on taking the prisoners to the *wagen-burg*, did not shew his face again in the vanguard, but remained sick at the head-quarters. An order soon arrived in which it was said: "That Pustomeyleen is rewarded with an order for taking prisoners a hundred and twelve Turkish foot-soldiers, with the co-operation of Cornet Vejeeghen, to whom, at the same time, the approbation of the commander-in-chief is communicated."

This displeased my brother-officers, and made me quite furious. I rode up to head-quarters, abused Pustomeyleen, calling him a coward and a rascal, shook my fist at him and challenged him. I was placed under arrest, and was to be brought before a court-martial, but got off through the intercession of my brother-officers and Colonel, who again congratulated me, and consoled me with the Russian proverb: 'On God your prayer, and on the Tzar your service will never be lost.' "Be comforted, Vejeeghen!" said my worthy Colonel to me. "Thou has fulfilled thy

duty : thou hast shewn thyself a brave and active officer, and hast acquired the esteem of thy comrades—that is the greatest of rewards to a noble mind ! Injustice and mistakes happen every where, but that should not cool thy zeal for the service. Have patience only, and truth will come out in its turn ; however much people endeavour to twist it and entangle it in intrigue, it will find a vent for all that.”

In a few weeks after this, our army halted in a position facing the whole of the enemy's forces, who were entrenched in a fortified camp protected by its advantageous situation. Arrangements were made for a general onset. The commander-in-chief came up to the vanguard at the very time when the Turkish cavalry flanked our hussars and Cossácks. The whole cavalry of our vanguard was in battle-array, and the foot under arms, while all were looking on at the individual conflicts between the Turkish horsemen and our hussars and Cossácks, as on a dramatic spectacle. The commander-in-chief with his staff, and a number of foreign officers stopped to enjoy this really attractive scene, where address and courage had so extensive a field for distinction. To give their due to the Turkish cavaliers, they excel almost all nations in the management of their horses, of their arms, and in feats of personal strength and dexterity, although their fiery bravery cannot withstand our steady courage and firmness in general attacks. Above all was distinguished a Turkish horseman richly caparisoned, on a white horse. With astonishing daring he came to close quarters with our flankers, and had already unhorsed

several of our very best hussars. The commander-in-chief was nettled at this display of Asiatic dexterity in the presence of foreigners, and in chagrin said to our Colonel:—"Have you nobody to match that bully and punish him for his arrogance?" On hearing these words, I immediately seated myself on my mountain horse, opened out my Kirgheezian noose, and asked the Colonel for permission to engage the Turkish horseman. He permitted me, but I observed that his eyes expressed commiseration mixed with love for me. "Vejeeghen!" said he, "I know that thou art no coward, but science is here necessary, and thou canst not have learned horsemanship in the civil service. I am sorry for thee!" "You shall see!" said I, while I changed my hussar-cap for a foraging one—gave a spur to my horse, and was off.

I had an extreme desire to take the horseman alive. I first fired a pistol at another Turk, then rode up to the cavalier, fired another pistol at random, turned my horse's head, and threw myself to a side as if I was going to reload my pistols. The Turkish horseman, observing that I was quite separated from my countrymen, rode up to me precipitately, made towards my left side, and rushed forward in order to cut off my head with one blow of his *yataghán*. At this decisive moment I turned myself under the horse, while the Turk, losing his balance by the violence of the exertion, reeled back upon his saddle. I immediately resumed my seat, and riding up behind the Turk, threw my noose about his neck, pulled it, and he fell upon the ground. This unexpected fall on his back at

full gallop took away his breath. The reins of his stallion were thrown back into his hand over his shoulder, and the horse was stopped by the fall of his rider. I alighted, disarmed the cavalier, fettered him with the noose, lifted him from the ground, and threw him, insensible as a clod, over the saddle, upon his belly, leaped up behind him, seized the reins of his Turkish stallion, and galloped off to the regiment. A crowd of Turks ran forward, shouting, to rescue their leader, but our commander-in-chief ordered a couple of squadrons to trot out, and the Turks turned their horses' heads. When I reached the *polk*, there was a buzz and speaking through the ranks. The commander-in-chief with his suite came up to me, dismounted, and requested me to go towards him. I leaped from my horse, took off my prisoner, unbound him, and presented him to the general who embraced me, squeezed my hand and said: "I thank you for this gift, and make you this present in return." At these words he ordered his adjutant to untie a cross of Valadimir with a ribbon, and with his own hands fastened it to the strings of my jacket. "I will not forget you!" added he, and went away.

The officers of our *polk* surrounded me, congratulated, embraced me, and every one of them seemed as glad as if the triumph had been his own. The Colonel pressed me to his heart, and with feeling, said: "Thanks for maintaining the honour of the *polk*!" I was in extacy, and never in my life felt such joy. "Deliver to Petroff my Turkish stallion, and order him to bring me my fronting horse," said I to the

sergeant. "I am here!" uttered a voice at my back. Tears trickled from Petroff's eyes, but a smile played upon his mouth: he wished to kiss my hand, but I pressed him to my bosom: he was speechless. Taking my booty, he went slowly along the front, crossing himself and moving his lips. My worthy Petroff was praying for me!

Nothing else of consequence happened that day. Towards evening the troops retired into their position, and our Colonel went off to the commander-in-chief, who was posted with the principal division at two versts' distance from the vanguard. Within an hour after the Colonel's departure, a messenger rode up with orders for me immediately to appear before the General. The Colonel was waiting for me in the adjutant's tent, and I had scarcely dismounted when I was ordered into the tent of the commander-in-chief. I there found a number of generals and staff-officers. After me entered Pustomeyleen without his sword. "Cornet Vejeeghen!" said the commander-in-chief, "your esteemed Colonel has told me of your proceeding, of your capturing the Turkish detachment. The renown of that proceeding and the reward were appropriated to himself by this gentleman, (pointing to Pustomeyleen,) who unfortunately belongs to my family. I was led into a mistake and brought to do an act of injustice by people who do not know me, and thought to do me a favour by furnishing an opportunity to reward my relative. But in the army brave warriors are my only kindred: they are my full brothers, they are my children and nephews! He who wishes to serve his

sovereign and country faithfully, ought to act justly towards those who are placed under him, and to reward nothing but merit, by which no harm is done to the service, as is the case when the partialities and preferences arising from relative ties and other private motives interfere. More harm is done by such injustice, than if no rewards were given at all. Recollect this, you who have the command ! So I congratulate you Lieutenant Vejeeghen : as to you, Mr. Pustomeyleen, please to return immediately to St. Petersburg under the wings of your aunts and grandmothers, and do not shew your face again before me. There is plenty of room for you on glazed floors : on the rugged field of battle, scraping, bowing, and speechifying gentlemen are out of their element. Adieu !” Leaving the tent joyfully I saw Pustomeyleen, who seemed quite downcast. I wished to say something to console him, but feared I might give offence to his vanity. My comrades formed a circle about me, and drank to my health with three cheers.

Next day was a general action, in which a great deal of blood was shed, and both sides fought with determined obstinacy. The Turks were twice our numbers, but Russian bravery strengthened by discipline gained the day. Their fortified camp was taken by storm : artillery, baggage, a number of standards, horse-tails and prisoners, fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Turkish army was broken and scattered.

Our *polk* was in the action and greatly distinguished itself. But we lost much in killed and wounded, as we were opposed to the flower of the enemy's forces.

While we charged sword in hand, I was rather heated, and separated from my hussars among the very thickest of the enemy's ranks, who could not run from us, as they had behind them a defile which was occupied by Janissaries. They fought with desperation: the Janissaries fired upon us from the sides and hollow of the defile: the sabres were in perpetual and furious motion; the word of command could not be heard for the noise and shouting; the trumpets sounded, and we broke through the enemy's ranks. I was so hemmed in that I could hardly manage my sword. Blows were showered down on every side, and I at random slashed away right and left. But I soon felt that blood bathed my eyes, and that my left arm had not strength to hold my horse. At this moment some one seized my horse's reins, and pulled him forcibly back. On getting out of the crowd I rubbed my eyes and saw that it was — Petroff.

I had got two wounds in the head, one on the left arm, and one on the right shoulder. The blood ran in streams, and I grew weaker and weaker every minute. At the distance of about a verst from the field of battle, Petroff took me from off the horse, took out of his saddle-bags ready-prepared bandages, ligaments and lint, washed my wounds with water and vinegar, bound them up, then replaced me on my horse, seated himself behind me on the krupper, and clasping his arms about me, conducted me to the *wagen-burg*, with his horse tied to my stirrup.

My wounds were severe but not dangerous. The only fear was, lest my weakness from excessive loss

of blood might end in exhaustion. I could hardly move my legs, and availed myself of the first opportunity to set off for Russia.

Petroff never stirred from me, but even slept beside me. No tender mother takes more care of her only child, her darling son, than the good old soldier cared for me ; boiling my victuals, giving me medicine, taking me under his arm to walk a little ; in the day-time, while I was asleep, driving away the flies, in the night-time starting if he heard me sigh or cough. He lived for me alone, and whenever I attempted to thank him, he would always make wry faces and say : " When you thank me, your honour, there seems to be always something not right and out of place, as if I was ashamed of something. You know it is my duty to serve my commander : what is the use of thanking ! Grow well again, and that will be the best way to put me in a good humour."

On arriving at Kamenetz Podolsk, I wrote to Meloveeden to Kieff, intending to set off thither if he should still be there. I addressed the letter to the commandant whom I knew : he wrote me back that Meloveeden had effected a reconciliation with his uncle and set off along with him to Petersburg. This put me into a dilemma, as I had very little money remaining, and had not the means to continue my journey to Moscow. " It is a bad job, brother, to be without the needful," said I to Petroff. " That is very true, Sir ; but we have no reason to complain upon that score." " Why, I have only thirty ducats altogether." " A little more," said Petroff, going into

the other room : he brought back two heavy bags. What is the meaning of this," exclaimed I in amazement. " Your money, Sir," replied Petroff : " there are here fifteen hundred full-weight Turkish ducats, and besides that here is a crest of diamonds." " From whence didst thou take that ?" " You took it, and I only kept it snug. When in the night-time you captured the foot-soldiers, I eased their commander of his turban and sash, lest they might fall into the hands of another ; and, when in the eyes of the whole *polk* you caught that swell of an Aga, I rode up to the spot where he lay stiff as a stock, and also took up his turban, knowing that the Turks are in the habit of hiding their yellow-boys there. Besides that, in his saddle I found two handfuls of gold ; and this is what has filled our treasury. I said nothing about it to you before, for fear you should give back the money to the Turks, or, what was more likely, gamble it away, as I saw that you had begun again to your old trade on the bivouacs, to drive away ennui." " Hear me, Peter ; the money is thine, and I will not agree to take it except as a loan." " Why should it be mine, when you gained it at the risk of your life ? Booty in battle is neither sin nor shame, but it is both sinful and shameful to plunder one's own countrymen, and screw it out of their provisions, forage, and even out of hospitals ! God be with them, but at any rate this money is fairly ours ! Take what you like, be it on loan, or be it your own, only take it : it is at your disposal."

I sold my horses, but kept my Turkish arms and

accoutrements in memory of my victory. After buying a comfortable calash, I set off for Moscow to recover my health, and arrived there safe in the end of the autumn.

CHAPTER XII.

I retire from the Service.—Remove to Petersburg.—Difference between Petersburg and Moscow Society.—Wicked design.—Unfortunate young woman.—I am put into prison.—Happiness and misery may subsist together.

ON my arrival in Moscow, I immediately flew to my mother in her convent, and she almost fainted for joy at seeing me with a token of distinction. But my paleness and weakness disquieted her, and she advised me to leave the army, fearing that the military service might completely undermine my health. Peace was concluded—my worthy Colonel was promoted to be a General, and the *polk* given to another Colonel. I wished on my own part to repose, and taste the pleasures of quiet; so, after collecting my certificates, I gave in a petition, and received my dismissal, with an elevation of rank and permission to wear my uniform. After visiting all my acquaintances and patronesses who already knew by report of my adventures, and gave me a flattering reception, I began to nurse myself, and did not leave the house for two months. My mother visited me every day—after consulting with her, we settled that I should set off for Petersburg, having now a fair claim to patronage, and petition for some comfortable situation which might afford me a livelihood. My curiosity was, besides, another inducement to visit that famous capital, where I hoped also

to find Meloveeden and cousin Annette, who had at last rejoined her husband and settled in Petersburg. My health being re-established, I provided myself with letters of recommendation, and in the end of the winter set off on my journey.

I arrived in the night-time, and alighted at Demuth's hotel. Next day I sallied forth through the town in order to make myself acquainted with the bearings of the streets, which I knew from the plan. The universal cleanliness, order, and a certain agreeable plainness in the midst of luxury, made a favourable impression upon me, and gave me a high opinion of the refinement of the inhabitants. Here I met with no Gothic equipages as in Moscow, nor any Harlequin liveries : neither found I the dirty lanes of Moscow, nor grotesque houses with monstrous figures, nor filthy shops and ruinous huts beside gorgeous and empty palaces. Before this time, I had no conception of an European city, and only now saw the reason why the inhabitants of Petersburg call Moscow an overgrown village. It is true Moscow stands before Petersburg with respect to its situation, antiquities, and historical recollections. Moscow is the heart of Russia, but Petersburg is the head. Moscow is the same to the people of Russia as Rome was to the descendants of Romulus after Constantine the Great had removed the seat of empire to the charming Byzantium. Moscow is the cradle of all the ancient Russian families : on the other hand, why should not Petersburg be dear to all as long as the name of Peter the Great and his illustrious successors is cherished in our memory ? Nevertheless

the heart always beats stronger at the recollections of Moscow. Like a Mahometan whose faith requires him to make a pilgrimage, at least once in his life, to Mecca, a true Russian reckons it the most sacred of duties to visit Moscow. The sight of the Kremlin and of the temples of God, which, in olden time, united the desires, the hopes, the joys, the sorrows of our ancestors, feeds the soul, and elevates our love of our country.

I sought out cousin Annette, who was extremely glad to see me. She introduced me to her husband, an unwieldy fat man, with a Tartar physiognomy, who lived in his own way, without troubling himself about his wife, played at whist, ate and drank for ten, and busied himself about *vodky*-contracts with the exchequer. He bowed to me drily enough, begged me to visit him, and leaving me alone with his wife, set off—to eat oysters. Cousin Annette told me that Meloveeden had been in Petersburg with his wife and uncle, for the purpose of cancelling his testamentary disposition, and various writings and bills, which Avdotya Ivanovna had prevailed upon him to sign, while he was under her clutches. Having settled all his affairs successfully, Meloveeden resolved to abandon for ever the great world of which he was weary: he bought for himself a charming estate on the southern coast of the Crimea, and settled there along with his uncle, who had exchanged his old hobbies for *grande patience*,* and the Moscow Gazette; had become a

* A game at the cards played by one person, requiring little or no attention, but merely to distribute them according to their suits,

great politician, and from the prophecies of Martin Zadek, Albert the great, and Bruce's Calendar,* foretold great changes in the world. Meloveeden and his wife laid it down as a rule to listen to him two hours a day, and for that he left them all his property.

Cousin Annette introduced me into some houses of the best society: in addition to this, I had letters from many persons of distinction in Moscow, and thus I soon formed an extensive circle of acquaintance. Petersburg society is in general much colder than that of Moscow, and in every house attempts are made to carry etiquette and punctilio to the utmost. The presence of foreign envoys gives to society a sort of diplomatic gravity and restraint which stiffens and strait-laces social intercourse. Here they do not like story-tellers, nor good-fellows, nor people who amuse the company by their talents, who are so much sought after in Moscow. In Petersburg every one must speak from notes, proceed upon plan, and appear in the house when he is wanted, like an actor in a comedy. Here every acquaintance is an object of calculation, and is valued for the sake of his consequence, his connections, or his family. Every one looks on his acquaintances as steps to the ladder of rank or

sometimes in the form of letters in the alphabet, such as the initials of the emperor's name or the like.

* Bruce was descended from a Scotch family claiming an alliance with the blood royal of Scotland; he was made a Count by Peter the Great, and seems to have imported the second sight from his native country; for an almanack composed by him still maintains its credit in Russia for its remarkable prophecies, many of which are said to have been actually accomplished.

fortune, and gets hold of as many as are necessary for him to reach the summit of his wishes. Some are received because they are necessary; others, because they serve to amuse necessary people. The amusement is — card-playing; and so, he who can play high, is received into society in order to form a party for people of consequence. Petersburg passes for a musical city, or to speak more correctly, for a city where there is much singing and playing upon musical instruments. This is true, but hence does not follow the conclusion that there are here many real connoisseurs and amateurs of music. They play cards in order to avoid speaking, and hear music for the same reason: after dinner, the subject of conversation is—the weather. Nobody likes to tell his mind here, because every one is seeking or expecting something, and in such a predicament dialogues are dangerous. The frank discoursiveness of Moscow, the freedom from restraint in behaviour, and the old-fashioned Russian hospitality, are reckoned here unsufferable rudeness and Gothic barbarity. Here they bid no one as in Moscow, at first sight, to come every day to dinner, and spend every evening, but invite you out of favour; and, as every body is here busy about something or nothing, you must not visit your acquaintances except upon set days and hours, and at fixed times. In Moscow the language of high life is a strange medley of French and Russian; but in Petersburg, you do not hear a word of Russian: you must speak French with the pure Parisian accent, and the smallest blunder against the rules of grammatical precision is noted as ignorance.

In Moscow they sometimes speak of Russian literature, the Russian journals and authors; but, in Petersburg, that is a mark of *mauvais ton*. The learning of the great world does not extend farther than criticising French literature according to the system of La Harpe, conning over the articles of the *Journal des Debats*, and reading English romances in the original. Not one Russian writer or artist of eminence is received into the higher circles, unless he enjoys the special patronage of some man of note. There is one exception to this rule, to wit, a regard for Moscow notability: the master or mistress of the house, on presenting a new man not known in the Petersburg world, apologizes by saying that he is known in Moscow. The youth of Petersburg, even before they come to maturity, gather an air of coldness in their behaviour, which makes young people particularly insufferable and disagreeable. They make their friendships not from any coincidence of taste and habits of thought, but from the importance of the connexions and relations of their comrades. Every man who cannot do anything for them, who can neither help them forward himself, nor put them in the way by means of his friends, is reckoned a useless member of society: they behave towards him haughtily and even shun his acquaintance. The females also are subject to the general spirit of place-hunting; they are as cold in their demeanour as the gentlemen, and, to say the least, are too dead, at any rate, so far as outward appearance goes. Tenderness and sympathy follow the fashion like bonnets. The ladies of Moscow scold and romp, but with all

their faults they have hearts which feel, as well as hands which help. Here they sigh, talk most sentimentally upon morality, and set lotteries agoing for the poor. A Petersburg ball would appear to be under the management of a co-operative society consisting of a French ballet-master, a Chinese master of the ceremonies, a German knight of a rueful countenance, and an Italian scene-maker. Every thing in its place, enough of every thing, but more than all, *ennui*. In Moscow, on the contrary, they sometimes dance out of tact, sometimes the musicians go out of tune, sometimes there are tallow-candles amongst the wax-lights, sometimes the floor creaks in the dancing-room; after a hearty supper there is sometimes too much Champaign drunk; sometimes there is more noise at a ball than at a market: however, the merriment arises not from custom, but from the overflowing of the heart: people come to town expressly for the purpose of dancing and merry-making. — — — But I have made too long a digression, and have forgotten to say that there is no rule without exception, and that every thing which is here mentioned in a general sense must be understood only in part.

I played high at whist, danced, spoke the purest French, sang and played the piano-forte at domestic concerts, rode in a carriage with four horses, and had *connexions* with Moscow, that is to say, I could talk for half an hour with the lady of the house concerning her Moscow relations and acquaintances; consequently I was received and invited every where. But accustomed to the friendly and flattering attentions of Mos-

cow society, I was wearied with frequenting houses where the entertainers hardly vouchsafed me a look, or question about my health, or remark about the weather. I was necessary to no one, and those who received me thought they conferred an obligation upon me. Besides, I perceived that a party was forming inimical to me, composed of malicious old men and youth infected with intolerable pride.

The friendship of cousin Annette, and the small but excellent circle of her acquaintance, made up to me for the disgust which I felt at the great world, in which Annette appeared merely for the sake of convenience.

Summer came, the town emptied, every body went to their country-seats, and still I had done nothing for myself. Cousin Annette advised me to gain, in the first place, the good graces of some notable statesman, and after that be on the outlook for a place. The statesmen were extremely condescending towards me at the card-table, and in conversations about the weather; but I had scarcely hinted in the most distant manner my wishes to make myself useful to my country, and avouched my zeal for the public welfare, when the face of the statesman put on such a cold appearance, that the blood almost froze in my veins. I would sooner throw myself into a thicket of sabres than try to melt out of a heart of ice a drop of sympathy for my fate. The ladies would only interfere on behalf of their own relations, and so I resolved to wait with patience till something should cast up in my favour.

One day having gone out in the morning, and re-

turning home to dress for a dinner to which I was invited, I found a letter in French, in a female's hand of writing, of the following purport. "I know that you are as discreet as you are amiable. Come to-night at twelve o'clock, to the village of Emelyánovka beyond Yekatereenhof. Leave your carriage at the end of the village, and proceed alone on foot by the waterside. There in a solitary cabin, above the windows of which you will see a bunch of fresh twigs, a person waits you who takes a very lively interest in your fate. Circumstances oblige her to conceal herself and to be your friend in secret. Come, and you will learn all."

A love intrigue, thought I. And so, notwithstanding all their prudery, and eyes which cannot look up in the presence of a stranger of the other sex, the ladies here have a *penchant* for solitary places out of town! O those country-houses, what a charming invention! One may observe all due decorum—may go out for an airing to a solitary summer-house, hired in the name of some obsequious dependent, take a trip to the colonists to drink cream, &c. &c. Excellent, excellent, thought I: this will be some relaxation to make up for my ennui. I resolved to go to the place of rendezvous.

At twelve o'clock I was at the appointed place, found the solitary cabin, knocked at the wicket, an old woman opened it, and I entered the cottage. In the first apartment I found no one except a footman who stood at the folding doors: he immediately rapped them to behind him, and went out into the porch

as soon as I crossed the threshold. At this very moment three unknown men came out of the inner room, and one of them accosting me, begged me to sit down on a stool beside him, and listen to what he had to say. I was somewhat fluttered at this sudden and unexpected scene, but I resolved patiently to await the issue. "Ivan Ivanoveetch," said the unknown person to me, "it depends now upon yourself alone either to make or mar your fortune irrevocably. Though not born in lawful wedlock, you belong to a family which wishes to do something for you. If you are willing to sign this paper, and acknowledge it here in the notary's book, by that step you will make up for the injustice of one of the members of this respectable family; you will receive immediately twenty thousand roubles ready money, and besides, you will all your life-time enjoy the patronage of persons of great weight; you will procure such a situation as you want: you will have ranks and orders: you will get richly married: in a word, you will be a lucky man. If you refuse, your ruin is inevitable. Proofs of heavy offences will be brought against you, and not to mention Siberia, you may even fare worse. You are nobody: you stand by yourself alone, without family, without patronage: your acquaintances will leave you on the first breath of misfortune, and the ladies who have assisted you in your small affairs will shun you as a criminal on whom the disposers of wealth and power have set the stamp of reprobation. Make up your mind—here are the papers and ink—sign them—and God be with you! The money you may take first if you

chuse—here it is !” While one of the unknown persons was speaking, another placed upon the table two sheets of stamped paper full of writing, and a large book, while the third counted out the bank-notes. After a short pause, I replied : “ My good Sir, if your business had been fair, your proper course would have been to lay the proposals before me without any disguise. In the first place I beg you will inform me what family requires me to expiate the injustice of one of its members ? I know that I am indebted for my being to Prince Ivan Alexandroveetch Meeloslavsky, the last of his race. He died of his wounds without knowing even of my existence, leaving my mother with child. His property was divided into four parts among his second nephews, of whom I know nothing, as they were educated in foreign parts, and serve now in embassies. I was never on terms of correspondence with the relations of my deceased father, nor ever had any intercourse with them in the way of business. And so you will have the goodness to allow me to read the papers which I have to sign, and after that to consider well their contents before I resolve upon any thing. It is of no use to frighten me with Siberia, and with punishment for fictitious crimes. Know that I am not sprung from a cowardly stock ; my merits will speak for themselves ; and I will find protection in the laws of my country.” After saying this, I rose and went up to the table in order to take the papers ; but one of the unknown persons immediately snatched them up and put them into his bosom. “ And so you do not chuse to sign ?” asked the first unknown. “ I will

sign nothing without reading it," replied I. "That is your last word!" * "The last." "You have then yourself to blame," said the unknown. He ordered the carriage. Some minutes we passed in silence; a coach suddenly drew up at the door, and looking through the window, I perceived a female sitting in it. The three unknown persons took up the book, went hastily out of the cottage, seated themselves in the coach, and set off. I remained alone in the house.

The peasant-landlord and an old woman, his mother, asked me if I did not please to pass the night there? "Who hires these lodgings?" asked I. "That is what we do not know, father," replied the peasant: the house has stood empty upon our hand all summer, and yesterday some gentry came here and hired it for a single day, dined here, and off they have gone. I think *you* should know better who they be." I left the house and went away hurriedly towards my carriage, bewildered in thought about this extraordinary adventure. Going down to the sea-shore, and passing by some bushes, I heard a rustling; I looked that way, and the same moment a shot was fired; the ball whizzed by my head. The night was clear as day. On a sudden, a man rose up from among the bushes, and I recognized Vorovaateen!

He set off as fast as he could run among the brushwood, and in his flight loaded his piece. Being unarmed I did not venture to follow him, but ran to the spot where I had left my carriage. I did not find it,

* A Russian idiom used in bargaining.

but perceiving in the sand the marks of its having been turned, I conjectured that it had probably been sent back to town by the evil-minded persons. I snatched up a cudgel, and went along the sea-shore to Yekaterenhof.

Walking at a quick pace, and frequently looking about me for fear of pursuit or ambush, about half-way I heard a rustling in the wood. Summoning up all my presence of mind, I resolved to face a danger which it was impossible to avoid, being convinced that in a decisive moment boldness will generally baffle the most skilful calculation. Shouldering my cudgel I plunged into the wood where I saw something fly past, and there I found —— a female.

"Have pity upon me, ah, have pity upon me!" exclaimed she: "I am unfortunate enough already." I stopped, thunderstruck. That voice was known to my heart: it touched me and put my blood in motion. It seemed as if I heard the voice of Groonya. I took the female by the arm, silently led her out of the wood, looked her in the face, and a sudden thrill went through every nerve, and vein, and artery. A maid in the very bloom of youth, charming as an angel, stood before me; and putting her hands upon her breasts, with her eyes prayed for sympathy. I looked upon her, but could not pronounce a word. Her dark nut-brown hair was dishevelled, and hung carelessly over her shoulders. Her long eye-lashes were wet with tears: her deep azure eyes reminding me of the bewitching eyes of Groonya, expressed fear and hope: her charming mouth was half-open and seemed ready

to cry for mercy. She was dressed in white, and covered with a dark mantle. "What do you here in the wood alone, and at this hour?" asked I at last. "I fled from deceit, from treachery, from debauchery, and I do not know where to conceal myself; I am afraid to return alone to the town, and I have no place of refuge where to lay my head!" "Come along with me; I will be your guide and protector. Here have I also met with deceit, treachery, and assassins." Without waiting for an answer from the young woman, I took her by the arm and pulled her along. Her arm trembled in mine; with inquietude she gazed upon me, and hurriedly followed me. I stopped. "You are afraid of me," said I: "I swear by God, and by the honour of a Russian officer, that I have no bad intention towards you: I am ready to sacrifice my life for the protection of your honour, and while I am alive, no one shall dare to touch you." "I believe you," said the young woman; "be my guardian angel: I am unfortunate, very unfortunate!"

I was in such confusion that I could speak no more, and went along silently, holding her arm. At the end of the village which borders on Yekaterenhof, I perceived my carriage. My hired footman was sleeping on the grass, the coachman and *vorreiter* were slumbering on their seats. I awakened them. "Why hast thou left the place where I ordered thee to wait?" asked I the footman. "I was ordered, in your name, to set off for Yekaterenhof." "Who ordered thee?" "A footman dressed in livery and gold lace." My conjectures were confirmed. I requested the young

woman to sit down in the carriage. She obeyed in silence. "What do you mean to do with me?" said she, bursting into tears when she heard me order the coachman to drive into town at full speed. "I told you that I have no place of refuge. I am a poor orphan thrown by fate on the world, without a home." "Be comforted: I am a bachelor: I will not dare to take you to my own house. I will procure you a shelter with a respectable lady: but I beg you will not conceal your condition from me, but tell me the particulars of your misfortune." "Without doubt, I must tell you every thing which has happened to me; but give me your word not to pursue the people who threw me into the condition in which you have found me." "I give you my word." "Listen then."

"My father had the rank of staff-officer, and was a poor nobleman. He served as secretary with a functionary who was married to a rich widow having a daughter by her first marriage: this daughter was my mother. The secretary fell in love with his superior's step-daughter, and was loved in return. The lovers having no hope of getting the consent of the proud step-father, married secretly. I may say in a few words, that the marriage was discovered, the daughter turned out of doors, and disinherited in favour of the children by the second marriage. My father at the same time was expelled from the service.

"Working hard for a subsistence, he died five years ago. My mother employed herself in my education, taught me foreign languages, music, needlework, and gained a livelihood by taking in work, and by giving

lessons in a female boarding-school. It is now two years since she died, leaving me a friendless, houseless orphan!" At these words the young woman wept bitterly. After a short pause she continued.

"The boarding-school in which my mother gave lessons no more existed. I knew no one in the town except a Frenchwoman, who kept a dressmaker's shop, to which I carried my mother's work for sale. I went to the Frenchwoman, and with tears begged her to receive me into her workshop. She complied with my request, and gave me a respectable situation among her sempstresses; she caressed me, gave me good clothes, and behaved towards me in general better than to the other sempstresses. I wrote to Moscow to my grandmother, representing to her my unfortunate condition, but received no answer. Two years I lived there comfortably. Yesterday I completed my sixteenth year.

"My mistress presented me with a new gown on my birth-day, caressed me more than usual, seated me beside herself at dinner, took me an airing with her out of town, and in the evening, calling me into her room, said: "Oleenka! Here is a basket with a ball-dress, which you will take with you in my carriage to a country-house on the Peterhof road, where that old man lives who comes here so often, and speaks so kindly to you. This gown is for one of his daughters. From this time you will have to fill the situation of my assistant, and go my errands. The gentry like when such sweet creatures as you call upon them, and pay much better than they do old

women like me. Be respectful, my good girl ; don't be shy ; know and recollect that you are not ugly, and learn to take advantage of your beauty. Youth does not come twice in a lifetime."

"Not daring to disobey my mistress, I took up the basket, seated myself in the carriage, and set off under the guidance of the coachman. I was well acquainted with the features of the old man to whose house my mistress sent me, but did not know his name. He bought and ordered a great deal at our shop, made presents of confections to the sempstresses, and behaved towards us very kindly and respectfully. It was rather late before I arrived at his country house. A footman took me into the hall, and begged me to follow him into the inner rooms. Thinking he was conducting me to the young ladies, I followed him boldly, till I found myself in the old man's cabinet. He was sitting in his sofa in his morning-gown, beside a table laid out with fruit, preserves, and wine. "Sit down here, my angel," said he : "But where are the young ladies?" asked I, in confusion, not knowing why. "They will be here immediately, but take a seat and don't be obstinate!" I seated myself on a chair, but the old man dragged me to the sofa, and plied me with fruit and wine. I refused the wine, but, not to offend him, took a little fruit. He began to pat my cheeks with his hand : in consideration of his years I took no notice of that ; but when he proceeded to take liberties which were not fitting either for him or for me, I indignantly started from my seat, and attempted to leave the room. The old man laid hold

of my arm, and said : " I say, my dear, you must not be childish or obstinate : Love me — and your happiness is fixed for ever and aye !" I looked at him contemptuously, and could not say a word from excess of indignation. The old man continued : " I have an old and ill-tempered wife, and if thou wilt sweeten my life with thy love, I will give thee the first day thirty thousand roubles, and, by a regular document, bind myself to pay thee an annuity of ten thousand. Thou art still so young, that, ten years after this, thou mayest easily find a husband ; and, if thou be constant to me during that time, I promise thee to add in the tenth year other thirty thousand." My patience forsook me. " How dare you propose to me ignominy and prostitution ?" exclaimed I. " You have certainly never known any honest woman in your lifetime, when you venture to suppose that love may be bought for filthy lucre. Are you not ashamed, considering your years, and that you are a married man, to think of seducing a poor young woman ?" " But thy mistress, my love, has already sold thee to me. Thou art owing her for clothing, and for maintenance." " My mistress is as despicable a creature as thou art !" said I, putting away his hand, and when he attempted to stop my retreat, shoving him so that he fell down upon the sofa. " Dishonourable tempter !" said I, standing in the middle of the room, and taking a knife into my hands ; " Let me go, or I will teach you how you injure a Russian gentlewoman. Know that I am the daughter of the counsellor of court, Alexander Uralsky, and of the general's daughter, Eugenia

Sláveen. I am thy equal in birth, and thy superior in nobility of feeling. Let me go, you scoundrel!" I had scarcely named my parents, when the old man covered his face with his hands, and exclaiming, "My God!" ran into the other room. Not being able to open the doors, and not daring to go into the room to which the old man had retired, I opened the window, jumped into the garden, and found a wicket which opened into the road. Of the neighbours I asked who lives in that house, and learned that my tempter was Grabeelen, my grandmother's husband, the monster who deprived my mother of her inheritance."

"Grabeelen!" exclaimed I: "that rascal I knew from my childhood. My God, what a strange fate!" Olga continued:—

"Amidst my distraction and indignation, I did not know what to do with myself. I was afraid to go towards the town for fear of the rascal pursuing me; so I took the opposite direction. Perceiving a road on the right, I struck into it without thinking whither it might lead me, and at last found myself in a wood. I waited an opportunity till I should see some good people going past. Some carriages passed along the road, but nobody else appeared. I began to lose hopes, and resolved to pass the night in the wood, when on a sudden you came up, and made directly towards me. I was terrified, but when you looked into my eyes, my fear vanished, and I felt, I do not know right, not terror, but something terrible, and at the same time consoling. I was afraid of a person of the other sex,

but my heart whispered to me that I had found a generous protector. In your eyes I read that you will not injure me."

"Your heart guessed right, Olga Alexándrovna: henceforth I am your father, brother, and protector! Rely, in all things, on God and on me. As long as I live, you shall want for nothing, and I ask nothing of you in return,—nothing but the favour that you will believe me that I am ready to risk my life for you, without being actuated by selfish motives. Do you believe me?" She squeezed my hand, and in tears, said: "I believe you are a noble man: God will reward you!" I ordered the coachman to drive to the good cousin Aneta's.

It was by this time three o'clock in the morning. All in the house were asleep, but I ordered them immediately to awaken the hostess. She came to me shuddering from fear, thinking that something extraordinary had happened to me. I said nothing of my adventure in the solitary house, as Cousin Aneta did not know the secret of my birth: I merely related to her Oleenka's story. The kind and worthy Aneta gladly received her into her house, and thanked me for bringing the unfortunate girl, as if I had conferred a favour upon herself. Noble woman! I returned home quite distracted.

Of course I did not sleep. I was in love. Oleenka had kindled a flame within me, not such a blazing, devouring passion, as the bewitching Groonya had raised in my heart, but a love, sweet and tender, which knows no other desire but the happiness of

the beloved object, and excites not a single earthly thought connected with external charms. Oleenka seemed to me to bear a considerable resemblance to Groonya, but in such a way as if Groonya's picture had been drawn with the look of an angel, and an expression of modesty which was wanting in her. Groonya's beauty was splendid; Oleenka's was melting. Groonya's looks devoured the heart and put the blood into a feverish motion; Oleenka's looks poured into the soul a soft delight. It seemed to me that I fell in love with Oleenka on account of her likeness to Groonya; but at the same time I felt that if she had been an exact likeness of Groonya, I could not have loved her as I did. Oleenka appeared to me the ideal of beauty which had long existed in my imagination, and which I sought in my heart. Was not my love to Groonya first occasioned by that resemblance to the idol of my fancy, which at last I found in Oleenka?

When I had no more strength to think, I fell asleep: I was agitated with strange dreams. A serpent of a frightful size attempted to devour me. I awoke at four o'clock in the afternoon, alarmed and restless; my heart beat strongly, and at that moment Petroff entered the room and said: "Your honour! The police-officers require you immediately to dress yourself. Here they are."

One of them announced that he had orders to seal up my papers, and to take me with him to the town-prison. "Was it told you what I am accused of?" "No, but you will learn that soon." Guessing

whence this blow had come, I hastily dressed myself, and leaving two other officers in possession of my lodgings, I ordered Petroff to go to cousin Aneta's and tell her what had happened to me, and to wait in her house till the affair should come to an issue.

In the prison I was conducted into a separate room, and told that if I had money I might live as I pleased; I was only to be kept within the walls. In an hour after, cousin Aneta came, along with Oleenka. Petroff was with them. They were allowed to see me in the receiving room in the presence of the turnkeys. Aneta's countenance shewed the state of her mind: Oleenka could not restrain her tears: Petroff looked grave and grim. "What have you done?" asked Aneta. "A hellish plot of my relations which I do not quite understand, but have some faint conjectures. I swear to you upon my honour that I am guilty of nothing. Let us have patience! They will not punish me without a trial, and then I shall learn of what I am accused, and have an opportunity to justify myself."

I took some money from Petroff, and begged Aneta not to come to me in prison for fear of endangering her reputation. "You do not know women, when you speak in that way," replied Aneta; "female friendship is known, where the friendship of the other sex vanishes, and we free ourselves from all restraint to fly to the succour of the unfortunate. No, my dear friend, I will not forsake you." "Nor I," said Oleenka, in tears: "you are my deliverer and benefactor."

She could not say more—her sighs deprived her of speech.

We were obliged to separate, in order to free the attendant from the painful duty of being a witness of the outpouring of our friendship. "Your honour," said Petroff, "I did not leave you on the field of battle, and will not abandon you now, whatever may happen. Let your enemies beat the alarm as they like. Petroff will remain by you, till death strikes his evening-drum! A Russian soldier does not leave his watch in the hour of danger!"

Three weeks I passed in confinement, in company with the guilty and guiltless. I saw humanity degraded, and virtue unfortunate: I saw vices and weaknesses, but I have no inclination to describe them. Let a dark veil cover this receptacle of sorrows. Why should I lay open afresh the wounds which my feelings received from the hearing of crimes and the witnessing of scenes which, like pestilential herbs, corrupt the moral atmosphere? I leave it to a man with a heart tempered by experience, with a soul cooled by an intimacy with vice in its most horrid forms, to draw a living picture of the inside of a prison.

Cousin Aneta came every day along with Oleenka to visit me. Petroff never left me except at night. I heard that, in public, people were afraid to mention my name, and that my fashionable acquaintances blamed themselves for having known me. Only a few good ladies took my part, and would not beforehand condemn me, for crimes of which nobody knew.

One day Aneta being unwell could not make her usual visit, and sent Oleenka alone. The attendant, whose duty it was to watch us upon these occasions, being convinced that our conversation was harmless, permitted us at last to speak alone, and retired to a corner : upon this, I left the room altogether, and availed myself of the opportunity to sound Oleenka's inclinations towards me. "Olga Alexándrovna!" said I, "you do not despise me in my degraded condition?" She looked upon me emphatically. "Despise you!" said she; "but call me plain 'Oleenka.' I am vexed when you behave so ceremoniously, as if I was a stranger." "You feel compassion for me, dear Oleenka! But perhaps we will have to be parted for ever — — — I must confess to you that I cannot live without you, that I will die if I be snatched from you!" "Snatched from you, parted from you — never!" exclaimed Oleenka, and on a sudden blushed and held down her head. "I am persecuted by people of great influence," said I. "I am a friendless orphan as well as yourself. They threaten to send me to Siberia." "I will follow you," replied she; "will work for you, and befriend you as you have befriended me!" "O God, how happy am I! Oleenka, dear Oleenka, I love thee more than life itself—and thou" — —. Oleenka threw herself about my neck, and bathed it with tears. "I am thine, thine for ever!" exclaimed she, sobbing.— "Perhaps it is not right for me to declare myself: but I have not strength to disguise my feelings—I love thee!" I never was so happy as at that moment.

The prison became a temple of bliss. I could say nothing, but squeezed Oleenka's hand, and washed it with my tears.

The attendant came up to us, and we were obliged to separate. I went into my room, shut the door, and remained alone the whole day.

At last the interrogatory points were laid before me. The first thing of which I was accused, was of leaving Russia for the Kirgheezian *steppe*, of robbing, of making an inroad on the Russian frontiers, and of plundering caravans. In my justification I described every thing which had happened to me from the time of my leaving Moscow, Vorovaateen's treachery and my own illness, and referred to Meloveeden, Petroff, and lastly to Gayuk and the whole Kirgheezian *aool*. I was accused of changing my faith in the *steppe*. I referred to the clergymen in Moscow before whom I had fulfilled the observances of our church after my return from the *steppe*. I was accused of assuming a false title, and, by that means, of obtaining a rank in the civil service. I confessed that Meloveeden called me a nobleman in order to introduce me into good society, but that in my passport nothing was written about my designation, but merely that I was a free man. To this I added that I had gained by my blood personal nobility, had been promoted to be staff-captain, and had received the order of St. Vladimir. I was accused of participating with card-table swindlers in the plunder of the Dooreendeens. I owned that I was involved with these people in consequence of my connexion with Groonya, but denied that I had any share in the

affair alluded to, and referred to proofs of my absence from Moscow at the time. In conclusion, I described my adventure in the solitary cottage at Emelyánovka, and Vorovaateen's attempt to murder me.

A week elapsed after I had signed the answers to the interrogatories, and I impatiently expected a decision of my fate. Oleenka scarcely ever left me. I made a confidante of Cousin Aneta, who gave us her good wishes, and undertook to exert herself for my acquittal.

CHAPTER XIII.

A deliverer.—It is not the place but the crime which dishonours a man.—Just punishment of a rascal.—Secret discovered.—Legacy.—Love and friendship.—Lawsuit.—Advocate.—Secretary.—A visit to the judges.—Good people all the world over.

TEN days I remained in prison after my explanation with Oleenka. On the morning of the eleventh day, I was striding up and down the corridor expecting Oleenka, or Petroff with a letter from her, when on a sudden an attendant ran up bouncing upon me, out of breath, so as almost to upset me; and recollecting himself, exclaimed, "Oh, that's you: you're just the man I want! Please to follow me to his excellency." Without giving me time to add a word, he ran down stairs repeating: "Preciseness with a vengeance! Plague upon those generals!" On entering the receiving room, I saw a man in a rich embroidered uniform, with a ribband over his shoulder and two stars. I made my bow and awaited his commands. "You do not seem to know me, Ivan Ivanoveetch?" said he. I looked into his face, and was afraid I might be in a mistake. "You do not recollect the *turbulent* man?" added he with a smile. "Is it you, Peter Petróveetch?" exclaimed I, holding up my hands and standing stock-still. He threw himself about my neck and pressed me to his heart. "Do

you remember my words," said Peter Petróveetch, that truth will float to the top like oil? Here you see I am now covered over with honours which I did not seek, and my slanderers have been deprived of the means of doing harm or heaping up riches, by laying themselves open to all sorts of meanness. But let us go into your chamber, dress yourself and come along with me. You are free, acquitted, and the whole secret of your persecution has come out. Be not ashamed or downcast, because I found you in prison. You should bear in mind the inscription on the prison of Warsaw: '*It is not the place but the crime which dishonours a man.*'

I flew to my chamber, and Peter Petróveetch had scarcely time to come in at the door when I was already dressed. "Tell me, for God's sake tell me, why they pursue me, and what I have done to offend them." "You shall learn all, but now is not the time. Come along with me, and I will clear up all the mystery."

On the road, Peter Petróveetch questioned me concerning my adventures in the service, about Moscow, and about Meloveeden; but I was so full of anxiety to learn the secret, that I gave him confused and absent answers. On arriving at his house we shut ourselves up in his cabinet, and he spoke as follows:—

"The investigation of your affair was confided to me. I had scarcely read your answers to the interrogatory points, when I immediately conjectured that this was a continuation of the same intrigue for your destruction which had almost cost you your life in

Orenburg. Vorovaateen had been long known to me as an unprincipled man, who could stoop to any depth of villany. I ordered him to be arrested. In his lodgings were found bunches of false keys, instruments for forging assignats, counterfeit passports and post-orders, a quantity of stolen goods, in a word, all the marks of a connection and participation with thieves and other malefactors. I ordered some of them that were in custody to be examined, and they confessed that Vorovaateen was their guardian and confidant, that he concealed their implements and booty, gave them passports and post-orders, and pointed out to them where to steal. Vorovaateen was also implicated in several murders. I promised to mitigate his punishment if he should be sincere in his confessions, particularly with regard to you. The rascal was so frightened that he told even more than he was asked. He was sentenced to lose his civil privileges, and to be sent to the galleys. This is what I learned from Vorovaateen concerning you :—

“ Your father, prince Ivan Alexandroveetch Meeoslavsky, was a man of an honourable and noble disposition. Before setting off for the seat of war, he made a will, by which he appropriated two hundred and fifty thousand roubles to the child which the peasant-girl Avdotya Petróvna should bring into the world. The money and will lie in the Bank of the Foundling Hospital. As an executor he named his friend Count Bezpetcheen, and left it to his charge to seek out the unfortunate victim of his weakness. The will contained, besides, the following clause, ‘ that

the heirs at law should only succeed to this sum, in case they could produce clear evidence of the death of the child, and in that case they were to pay to its mother an annuity of six thousand roubles during her life. If in the course of thirty years, neither the aforesaid Avdotya Petróvna nor her child should be forthcoming, the money was to be placed at the disposal of the heirs at law.'

"Count Bezpetcheen sent his man of business to seek out your mother, but his inquiries were fruitless, and he did not prosecute them, but soon let the matter drop altogether. After your father's death, his immense property was divided among his second nephews the two Counts Neetchtózyeen, and the two Tchesteensky, children of the prince's first cousins. The mother of the Counts Neetchtózyeen, a native of Italy, or, as some say, of Pera, exclaimed loudly against the will, but did not dare to attempt to break it, because Count Bezpetcheen was in power, and the Tchestensky family were against interfering. A long time was suffered to elapse, when Vorovaateen at last became acquainted with you. Knowing all the particulars of this affair from his intimacy with the Countess Neetchtozyeen, and having frequently seen your deceased father, he conjectured from your resemblance to the prince, and from that part of your history which he heard from your own mouth, that you were the son of prince Meeloslavsky, and that Adelaida Petrovna was the same Avdotya Ivanovna, whom Count Bezpetcheen had not succeeded in finding. By bribing your mother's servants, Vorovaateen and the Countess

Neetchtozyeen were allowed to rummage all her effects and papers at a time when she was not at home, and they found the portraits of prince Meeloslavsky and some of his letters, which confirmed Vorovaateen's conjectures. Fearing that the news of the legacy might come to your ears one time or other, the Countess wished to get you decoyed away from Moscow. Vorovaateen recommended Nojoff, who undertook to murder you and your mother. For as black-hearted as the Countess was, she would not agree to this: she did not wish to do you farther mischief than taking the money, and promised Vorovaateen fifty thousand roubles for his trouble, if he should succeed in getting from you a renunciation of your patrimony or any legal document to that effect. Vorovaateen clung to you, and coiled himself about you like a serpent, gained your confidence, and led you astray. He endeavoured to raise in your mind a passion for gaming, to lead you into dissipation, and after that thought to get your signature for a trifle. Your love for Groonya gave his hopes another impulse, and when you agreed to go with him to Orenburg, he had no more doubts of succeeding, now that you had arrived at that age when your signature would be valid. Nojoff was sent by the Countess to Vorovaateen's assistance. They were ordered to hasten the business, because Count Bezpetcheen was expected in Moscow, and there was some risk of his getting tidings of Adelaida Petrovna.

"Your sudden illness deranged their plans, and they resolved to make away with you, to counterfeit

your signature, and get the money from the Countess. Providence delivered you out of their hands. The forgery of your name to an acknowledgment, as if you had received the money from the Countess, and transferred your claims to her also, did not succeed. Although they counterfeited your hand of writing in a masterly style, they could not get any notary in Orenburg to attest this false document without your personal presence. Besides, the rascals quarrelled among themselves, and Vorovaateen delivered Nojoff into the hands of justice ; but, in order to escape from the vengeance of his accomplice, removed to Petersburg, assumed the character of a saint, and acquired the friendship and patronage of a person who was equal to himself in a higher branch of roguery. The Countess had, in the meantime, gone abroad, and lived in Italy with her children till your arrival in Petersburg. Hearing your name in company, and recognising you by your resemblance to the late prince, she resolved to make another attempt to deprive you of your inheritance, which had by this time accumulated to a million. She soon found Vorovaateen, and they again laid their heads together. Having no hopes this time, of obtaining your signature by craft, he resolved to make you a downright proposal to sign the paper, baiting it with money, and browbeating you with threats of persecution. The plan was as absurd as it was daring ; but rogues and villains would never be convicted and brought to punishment, if their excessive daring did not sometimes carry them too far. He called in to his assistance some lawyers who had been expelled from

the service, found an obliging notary's clerk, and these were the *dramatis personæ* of the scene at Emelyánovka. When you refused to sign the papers, Vorovaateen, afraid that you might chance to find him out in Petersburg, resolved to make away with you, and fired upon you from the bushes. In the meantime, the information against you being already drawn up, was lodged by one of Vorovaateen's accomplices. For the investigation of such weighty crimes of which you were accused, it was necessary to take decisive and speedy measures : you were arrested, and the case was put into my hands. I avoided seeing you, for fear of giving cause for suspicions of partiality in consequence of our previous acquaintance. In other respects, I investigated the affair with all the strictness of law, and you are acquitted merely because you are innocent, and not because your judge was your friend : for, if you had been guilty, though you were my own son, I would have subscribed your condemnation. The secret is now unriddled. The Countess has given in a petition for cancelling the will, resting her plea upon the prescription of the country, and because the money bequeathed to you was not acquired by prince Meeloslavsky, but received by inheritance : a lawsuit is thus fastened upon you, which may be a greater bore than even your captivity among the Kirgheez. You must defend the action, but I would not advise you to bring forward Vorovaateen's evidence, as you have no written documents to implicate the Countess, and the Neetchtozyeen family is numerous and powerful : consequently its honour must not be

compromised. Besides, all the steps hitherto taken have nothing to do with the legality of the will ; while, on the other hand, the bringing forward of such evidence might lead you into a mess of trouble. Adieu, for the present : apply yourself seriously to the affair, seek out a clever lawyer, and, at my leisure, I will advise you how to proceed. I have got so much business upon hand, on various commissions and commitments, that I have scarcely time to breathe ; and, amidst all my desire to be useful, I must go through the greater part of my duty superficially. The man is to be pitied who has the name of being expert at business—he is then obliged to do the work of dozens of boobies !”

After thanking Peter Petróveetch for all his kindness, I hastened to the good cousin Aneta, or, to speak more correctly, to Oleenka. She had already heard from Petroff of my deliverance, and stood at the window impatiently looking on every side.

My secret would soon become public, in consequence of the lawsuit ; so I resolved to make a full disclosure to Aneta and Oleenka. I confess that I was loath to expose the faults of my parents, particularly my mother's frailty. But Aneta viewed the affair in its real colours, and even congratulated me on account of the princely blood which flowed in my veins. She assured me, that from the time of our first acquaintance, she had discovered in me marks of a high origin.—Oleenka did not open her lips. It would have been all the same to her though I had been the son of prince Meeloslavsky's coachman, because she loved me sin-

cerely, and true love never looks at pedigree. I begged cousin Aneta to publish my story in society. "If you wish this to be done effectually," said Aneta, "you ought to beg me not to publish it, but to tell it in a secret to some few of my female acquaintance: the news will then fly more rapidly than through the medium of the gazette. The word *secret* induces every woman to disclose it to her own friends also by way of *secret*, and thus it makes the round of the whole town, and is whispered into every body's ear. Women think that a secret is nothing else but a piece of news which must be repeated in an undertone with the formal precaution: "I tell it you in confidence, for I got it in a secret," &c. You see that I do not spare my own sex — that is due to our friendship."

Taking Petroff along with me I went to Demuth's hotel in order to hire fresh lodgings. The porter told me that travellers who had just arrived from Moscow had been inquiring for me and Petroff. I sent him to learn what Moscow acquaintances these might be, and in the meantime remained standing at the gate. On a sudden, I heard a shout on the staircase. It was Meloveeden—he threw himself into my arms.

"Whence comest thou, and why here?" asked I. "From home, from the Crimea, from the embraces of my wife and son, to thee, my friend, to help thee!" exclaimed Meloveeden. He laid hold of my arm and pulled me up the stair, saying: "Come along with me to mother." "How! Is she here?" "To be sure she is. She knew nothing of thy misfortune, because in writing thou saidst nothing about it, and she did

not believe reports." "I wished not to vex her." "I understand thee, but on receiving the news from cousin Aneta, I immediately bestirred myself, drove to Moscow, called upon thy mother, and when I told her what had happened, she begged me to take her with me." I squeezed Meloveeden's hand, and thanked him, but not in words. Real feeling is a poor speaker.

By this time, we had got up stairs, and the tears of my good mother bedewed my cheeks. After weeping and rejoicing, I told her in detail every thing which had happened to me, and explained the secret of my persecution. When I came to speak of the legacy, my mother was much affected and said: "I was not deceived in his soul! he thought of me, thought of the unfortunate pledge of our love. But I became unworthy of his heart and memory." She burst into tears, and we had difficulty in quieting her. In closing my narrative, I did not chuse to conceal the state of my affections, but made a full confession of every thing to my mother and friend. They did not oppose my inclinations: they only begged that I would not hurry my marriage, but wait till I became farther acquainted with Oleenka.

A fortnight had elapsed since my release. My mother went out nowhere but to church—cousin Aneta and Oleenka visited her every day. Meloveeden kept his vow, and did not appear in society. He passed the mornings in reading the newspapers and periodical publications, and in walking; called nowhere but on cousin Aneta and Peter Petróveetch, and, for amusement, went to the theatre. By Peter Petró-

veetch's advice I sent his house-steward to Byalo-Russia in order to seek out my baptismal registry, and learn in what way I had slipped into Gologordoffsky's house. In the meantime he sent me an experienced clerk out of his chancery, to give me some insight into the character and conduct of the different legal practitioners; of whom I selected the most distinguished, and appointed to meet them at my lodgings, every one at a separate hour. It was doubtless a wearisome task to which I had to submit from six o'clock in the afternoon till midnight; but this was only my first experiment in going to law: I did not know yet that in this labyrinth every step is attended with vexation; and that, like a body covered with boils and blains, every turning and every movement occasions a fresh twitch of mental agony.

This chancery-man, Theodosius Savelleetch Kaveeken had entered the service in his childhood, was up to all the artifices of law-craft, and knew by rote the biography of all the lawyers and people about the courts. His head was a perfect lexicon of chicanery. He was a man of a cheerful temperament, and occupied his leisure time in collecting scandalous anecdotes of the courts of law: accordingly he was glad of an opportunity to display his knowledge, and to be useful to his superior's friend.

Of the advocates invited, the first who appeared was Mr. Duratcheensky, a man of middle age, with enormous whiskers, and dressed in the first style of fashion. He wished to play the part of a *petit maitre*, of a high-bred, accomplished man of the world; but

his bent neck, his half-familiar tone, and his way of explaining himself evinced his low origin. "Excuse me for being rather behind my time. I am occupied in the service, in a highly respectable situation, and quite full of business. Besides that, private affairs, connections, acquaintances ! I am at present just come out of the English club where there are three senators waiting me to make up a party at whist. I am a member of the English club, and it is not everybody that can say as much. None but the most honourable and noble and distinguished characters are balloted in amongst us——so you may guess what an honour it is to be a member of the English club ! There I play high every day with the first people in the empire, settle business in a friendly way in the reading-room, collect a budget of news, and launch now and then some little story of my own under the rose. I advise you to manœuvre to get admitted into the English club. You cannot tell how useful it may be to you. There you get acquainted with every body worth knowing, give treats of Champaign, invitations to dinner, do your business — — —. It is true, I was not bred to private business : I draw my origin from a Count's family — — — but circumstances !"

Duratcheensky would have gone on at this rate all evening, but I gave him a note of my case, begged him to read it over by himself, and went into the next room where, by previous concert, Kaveeken and Meloveeden were waiting me. "What do you think of this swell ?" asked Kaveeken. "An empty, foolish braggart," replied I. "He is from the lowest class of

Lithuanians, and his nobility is all in his dress," said Kaveeken. "He was a boy, that is to say, a servant of Count Pyanotee, who taught him to read and write, and by an incomprehensible act of favour, made him afterwards his agent. What with the stories he tells on the one hand to the poor Lithuanian gentry of the consideration in which he is held in Petersburg, and on the other by what he makes the people in official situations here believe, of his provincial importance, Duratcheensky has raised himself out of the dirt, thrust himself into the service, and still continues to practise, that is to say, to deceive, to take money under false pretences from those who have business at law, and keeps it all to himself. He is such a block-head, that he cannot write a letter in any one language, but plays at whist, loses his money, brags that he has extensive property, and, owing to that, is tolerated among decent people. Turn him out without ceremony." I went back to Duratcheensky, took the note, and gave him his leave, telling him that I was engaged at present and would give him an answer afterwards.

After Duratcheensky, there came a little figure, a complete personification of chicanery. A little, dirty, withered, old creature, wrapped up in rags. He stood about a quarter of an hour unswathing his clothes, coughing, and clearing his throat, when at last he found his speech, and explained to me in the Byalo-Russian dialect, that his name was Pan Krootchkotvorsky, formerly chamberlain of the late Polish Court. "Now if you wish to gain your cause, my good

Sir," said he coughing, "the best thing you can do is to take me. All bad causes are put into my hands; if I don't gain, I will work your opponents so, that they will be glad to get rid of the law-suit, and give you whatever you demand." I put my note into his hands, seated him in an arm-chair, and went to Kaveeken, who said: "This is a rare adept at chicanery, who has attached himself like a chronic disorder to the courts of law for the last fifty years, though he was an old man before he came to Petersburg. Though dressed like a beggar, he wallows in riches. Would you believe that this wretched invalid has pocketed the dowries of three wives whom he has outlived. In making his marriage contracts, he regularly bargained that the longest liver should brook all. As he has carried a disease in his lungs for the last thirty years, you may easily imagine how tender females catch the infection, and wear out before the tough old stager. "Off with him! Off with him, lest he should contaminate the air by his very presence." I served Krootchkotvorsky in the same way as I had, Duratcheensky.

After Krootchkotvorsky, there came a stout, big, elderly man. He burst into the room like a wild boar, darted upon me a pair of wolfish eyes, and bellowed out his compliments in such a tone, that I took them for scolding. "Well, what? What have you got to do? Let me see it, and I will tell you immediately how to begin. But first of all, have you money." I put the note into his hands, and begged him to read it, but he refused. "I am not to trouble myself read-

ing other people's nonsense for nought. Down with your brass ; I don't move a jot without the needful !" I begged him to wait and went to Kaveeken. I had scarcely pronounced the advocate's name when Meloveeden got out with a "Bah !" and said ; "That is a famous solicitor of Mr. Gologordoffsky's, Pan *Struktchásny** Khapootchkévitch, a well known rogue who has changed his faith several times, has been banished for polygamy, and debarred from practising in the courts of law." "He has been several times banished from Petersburg," replied Kaveeken ; "but always finds his way back, like a fox to a hen-house. Away with the rascal, away with him !" "But tell me, if you please, why there are so many Polish lawyers here," asked I, "and why you give them such a bad character ?" "A substantial and respectable landholder will not remove to a strange place to live by practising the law," replied Kaveeken. "Honest and skilful advocates have at home sufficient means, not only for their maintenance, but for making their fortunes ; and besides, they enjoy universal respect. Owing to this, the only gentry who travel in quest of employment in this line, are chancery-clerks, advocates' assistants, and adventurers of all sorts, seeing that this is a very easy and lucrative profession, which requires neither stock nor skill except in lying and cheating. They take money from their clients on pretence of giving it to the members of the courts ; they keep it to themselves, and do nothing but abuse right and

* An old Polish title of rank.

wrong. These lawyers were for a long time a stain upon the character of the whole Polish nation, because the Russian functionaries who had never been in the Polish provinces formed their opinions of the people from these worthless samples. Things are now changed. Many well-educated and well-principled Poles have entered into the service at Petersburg, and by their behaviour have removed the existing prejudices. There are even among the lawyers worthy and respectable individuals (although very few,) and they, poor people, must suffer for the rest! But go and turn out Pan *Struktchášy*." I proceeded in the same way towards him as I had done towards the two others.

After him, came the Titular Counsellor Zagadtchenko, a native of Malo-Russia. When he had finished his introductory compliments, "We Malo-Russians," says he, "are a simple, unsophisticated sort of people, and like truth and plain dealing. I will tell you frankly what is good and what is not good. I gave him the note and went to Kaveeken. "That is a man whom neither I, nor the devil himself knows: Some speak very ill of him, others call him an expert and attentive man of business. He has gained many causes." I repeated to him what Zagadtchenko had said. "That is a common Malo-Russian stratagem, to assume an appearance of simplicity. I know among them many very honest and worthy people; I know many who have never cheated nor injured any one; but I do not know one who would let himself be taken in, or who would forgive an injury done him. You know that there is a German proverb; '*Er hört gras wachsen*,

(he hears grass grow.) I need not trouble myself explaining it, but merely tell you that the good folks of Malo-Russia hear the grass grow. The Russians, Poles, Bohemians, and other Slavonian tribes, like to shew off their wit. The Malo-Russians alone boast of their simplicity and roughness. Whenever a man gets the name of being subtle and artful, he can no longer avail himself of these qualities to the same extent as he otherwise might do. Consummate subtlety consists in being reckoned simple and rude. Recollect that in Turkey the rich Rayas feign themselves poor, in order that they may quietly enjoy their riches : the same thing occurs here with respect to intellect. But enough of this: dismiss Zagadtchenko. We will see afterwards what to do with him. I shall make some inquiries, and perhaps we may unriddle him at some chance moment !”

Lastly, there came a Russian advocate, Paphnooty Seedoroveetch Rubopéreen, who said in a decided tone that he would not undertake the business till he had looked over the documents, and come to some understanding with me regarding his compensation. I gave him the note, and returned to Kaveeken, who said to me : “ That is a man of business, who knows the laws, is a first-rate writer, and an indefatigable agent ; but give him no money beforehand, let him fast till he has a keen appetite, for he is rather inclined to bury his talent in the ground when he can get off with it ! I advise you to take Rubopereen. You will not find a better.” I told Paphnooty Seedoroveetch to make out an agreement and power of attorney, and,

in expectation of my messenger arriving from Byalo-Russia, I set myself to draw up a petition and memorial. We separated, and I was so wearied that I was hardly undressed when I fell asleep.

Meloveeden, notwithstanding all my entreaties, would not return home, but resolved to wait at any rate till my lawsuit was fairly commenced. I had already been ordered to produce evidence of my birth, and impatiently waited for the messenger's return. At last, after a delay of two months, Peter Petróveetch's steward made his appearance, bringing with him my baptismal registry, and for a witness, the Jew Josel, Mr. Gologordoffsky's old tacksman. Josel, from being a rich contractor, had grown poor in his old age, and employed himself in teaching the children of the new *kartchma* renter. Smuggling had been the ruin of him, and some of his rogueries had brought him to jail. This is the way in which I escaped out of the murderer's hands, and fell into Mr. Gologordoffsky's household.

When the midwife and Jew-doctor knew of my mother's flight, and were informed that she had found a protector, they packed up their moveables and decamped, taking me along with them. They did not think proper to murder me, supposing that, in case of their hiding-place being discovered, they might clear themselves from my mother's accusation, and quash the matter by restoring me. The Jew-doctor betook himself to his cousin Josel, without revealing the cause of his journey, but putting him off with a story of his having been invited by some rich Pan to settle on his estate as his village-doctor. He acknowledged,

however, that an officer had entrusted him with the boy of which he was the father by a peasant-girl who had died in childbirth ; and begged Josel to give me out to nurse, paying for a year beforehand. The midwife herself took me to the Russian clergyman, and ordered him to christen me, giving me the name of Ivan. When I began to crawl, the poor peasant-woman, my nurse, having lost her husband, was obliged to hire herself out to work in another village, and threw me by Josel's advice into Mr. Golgorodoffsky's house. The proof was clear, confirmed by the extract from the parish-register, in which it was distinctly mentioned that I was the son of prince Ivan Alexandroveetch Meeloslavsky and of Avdotya Petróvna. Josel stated farther, that the Jew-doctor was drowned, with all his family, as well as the midwife, in crossing a ferry in a rickety boat. "Your cause is good," said Rubopereen to me, on seeing the matriculation, and you will gain it if you exert yourself and strain every nerve. Without that you will be cast."

I came to an understanding with the secretary of the court, by means of the juridical arithmetic which I had learned at Moscow from Moshneen's friend. My secretary embraced me, kissed me, and even shed tears of sympathy when he heard of the persecutions which I had undergone. There is no science in the world which is such a softener of hearts as this practical arithmetic ! The secretary assured me that I would gain my cause immediately, and pledged his honour, life, children, that he would sooner die on the spot than record a decision against me.

Peter Petróveetch advised me to distribute memorials to all the judges, and to endeavour to explain my case to each of them in private. Rubopereen did his best in the composition of the memorial: stated the matter clearly and shortly, and quoted the legal authorities in support of it. I hired a coach and set out one morning along with my memorials.

On entering the lobby of the first judge, I had to repeat to the lackey ten times that I wanted to see his master, and could hardly get any answer from him. The servant insisted that that was no affair of his, and that I must wait till the valet came. Notwithstanding my hussar uniform, before which the Turks trembled, and which excited respect among brave Russian soldiers, the judge's domestics scarcely deigned to look at me, and would not put themselves to the trouble of speaking. At last when I told them that I would go into the cabinet without any announcement, the valet walked leisurely thither to his master, and returned, saying rudely, "Go in!"

The judge, Mr. Dremotoonoff, was an elderly man, and after the old fashion still covered his grey hairs with powder and wore a *quen*. He was sitting in a white dressing-gown before a mirror, and the hair-dresser in a greasy grey jacket had his poll under operation. "Take a seat, my good man," said the judge to me. I handed him the memorial, and sat down. "Will you take the trouble to read it yourself, and I will listen," said the judge. I made him another bow, and began to read loudly, distinctly, and slowly. "Good, good, all right," pronounced the judge;

" Senka, comb the crown, that's the way, good, gently ! Your cause, sir, appears to be just." Senka suddenly gave his hairs an untoward jerk, which made the judge exclaim : " You scoundrel ! you are scalping me ! " Then turning to me, his face flushed with pain and rage, he added : " Chicanery, sir, it is mere chicanery ! All your reasons are not worth a pin — — —. Ah that rascally Senka, what a tearing pull he has given me ! " In the meantime I ceased reading. " Why don't you read ? " I resumed the reading. " Very well, Senka, that'll do ; very gently ; now comb the right temple. Excellent, excellent ! " added he turning towards me : " your cause is clear, fair, and just—the law is decidedly in your favour,—Senka, you rascal, you are mangling me, that is a harrow in place of a comb ! Trickery, sir, fetches, it's all a mess of chicanery ! " exclaimed he again, and I again stopped. The judge pushed Senka to a side, and after taking his breath for a minute, ordered him to go on with the combing, and me with the reading. Luckily Senka went through the rest of the process without making any *faux pas*, and the judge rising from his chair in a good humour, wiped the powder off his face, and said : " Leave the memorial : I shall look at the original papers in the court : it seems to me that your cause is good." Overjoyed at this, I gave Senka a ten-rouble note in the lobby, and left the other servants to repent at leisure of their rudeness. Mr. Dremotoonoff was an old lawyer who had made his fortune, and at one time was over head and ears in business, but took the situation of judge in

his old age from mere ambition, and had at his beck the votes of some of his old friends.

Another judge, Mr. Formeen, whom I had met with in company, received me politely ; but, when I put the memorial into his hands, he shook his head, and said, "What is the use of this ? You do not suppose we are to be guided by the assertions of petitioners. I have been engaged in law-business for five-and-twenty years, and know it for an invariable rule, that all petitioners speak nonsense in their memorials." "My case is here stated with references to the laws and original documents," replied I : "probably the opposite party has done the same. If you will have the goodness to compare our statements with the evidence, and our references with the statute-book, you will see who is right and who is wrong." "Yes ; I have been engaged in law business for five-and-twenty years, and I know what memorials are !" exclaimed the judge. "Memorials among us are equivalent to the voice of the advocates," replied I. "It also appears to me, that, without reading the statements of parties, and learning the strong and weak sides, you cannot understand the case any more than a doctor can understand the case of a sick patient without hearing the particulars of his complaint." "Theory, sir, theory !" exclaimed the judge : "But I am a practical man : I have been five-and-twenty years engaged in law business, and know every thing which it is necessary for me to know. It is not the parties but the chancery which states all the particulars of the case, and discovers the strong and weak sides." "But

the chancery, amidst its multiplicity of business, may occasionally omit or mistake things ; and besides, they are not angels but human beings." "What do you understand by that ?" said the judge in an angry tone. "I have had five-and-twenty years experience of chancery-business, and know it for an invariable rule that the complaints of petitioners upon chanceries are without the slightest foundation. But don't despair," added he, assuming a placid air ; "we will examine your case attentively, you may depend upon it." I nevertheless left on the table my memorial, adding : "Do not read it, but take it : it relieves the heart of a petitioner. I cannot suppose that you would be so hard-hearted as to refuse to listen to an unfortunate man. Not to read our memorials is as bad as to drive a beggar from your door." On saying this, I made my bow and retired. In the lobby I overheard the judge exclaiming, "I have been five-and-twenty years !" The footman who gave me my great-coat, said with a smile, "Our master confuses in his reckoning : it is fifteen years now since he stopped at the twenty-fifth year of his judge-ship !"

This judge was a worthy, honest man, but he had spent all his life in any thing but the duties of his profession. In the court he thought of his books, and at home he thought of the court ; in company he spoke about law, and in court he spoke about company. He always spoke well, but did nothing ; and if he had fulfilled but the thousandth part of what he reasoned about so beautifully, he would have been a useful member of society. He loved honest and well-in-

formed people, and was on terms of intimacy with them, but suffered himself to be overruled by rogues whom he despised and hated, but had not the firmness to drive away or refuse. A worthy man, but a real nullity, who had only the consideration of a cypher.

From him I went to Mr. Tchoovasheen, who passed for a great man of business and a giant of jurisprudence. He also was neither a rogue nor a fool; but having, by means of his father's interest, attained a high rank in his youth, he lost himself in self-conceit, and sincerely believed that he had arrived at the summit of human wisdom. Educated among foreigners, and living always in the upper circles, gleaning what knowledge he had from foreign books, he did not know Russia, but looked at it through the prism of foreign ideas. In his old age his head was crammed with a conglomerated mass of theories, foreign laws and foreign commentaries, along with what knowledge of Russia he had picked up in conversation: all these jumbled together made such a chaos, that the good old man with the best intentions was continually committing absurdities. For a long time people did not understand his real character, but mistook his good intentions for great actions. At last they found that his head was nothing else but a lumber-room of mis-read books!

He received me in a civil and friendly manner: God save him for that! but when I proceeded to explain my case to him, he almost put me into distraction by his remarks. According to his notions of jurisprudence, women and children were never in the wrong; and, as Tchoovasheen had been already solicited by

the Countess Neetchtózyeen and her female friends, he would not persuade himself that I could be in the right. When I referred to the laws, he said that cases of this sort should be judged not by law but by conscience ; when I argued that according to conscience I should receive the money which was bequeathed to me in my father's will, he assured me that the law was against my claim. I pointed to the laws which were in my favour, and he, as a proof that he was acquainted with law, opened upon me whole bales of the writings of Bentham and other English writers on the theory and practice of jurisprudence. Wishing to display his legal knowledge, and the strength of his memory, he repeated pandects in place of ukases, and in place of English laws, quoted the code of Tzar Alexey Michaelóvitch, &c. I put an end to my visit, and with an aching heart left him. Before this time, as I had never any previous business with him, I reckoned him a great man, but was now convinced that public opinion is liable to be mistaken as well as private individuals. Tchoovásheen was an open protector of all peculators who had families, and screened them wherever and whenever he could. Many of these gentry married purposely in order to enjoy his protection, and wrote in their defence speeches which he delivered as his own. O human nature ! Tchoovasheen, notwithstanding his good heart, did mischief from mere self-conceit, and from a desire to pass for a Publicola.

A great part of the judges received my memorial in silence, and, by an inclination of the head, gave me a hint to retire. Others made me relate my adventures

in the Kirgheezyan *steppe* and elsewhere, and would not listen to business. Others excused themselves, saying that they were quite busy with affairs of their own. Others complained of their poverty, of the difficulty of getting the loan of money, and congratulated me on my claims to a million. In some places I was received very rudely, in others with such hauteur and repulsiveness, that I lost my patience and abandoned my task in disgust. It is true I found a few of superior minds, who consoled me by their friendly reception, and whose candour and sound judgment lessened my apprehension of their colleagues. In the course of a week I had visited almost all my judges, was more wearied in this week than by the whole campaign against the Turks, and even sickened upon it from vexation. If it should be thy holy will, O God, to expose me to more trials in this life, send me disease, send me beggary, send me captivity, but save me from law !

In the meantime, Meloveeden received word from his wife, that his only son was ill. I begged my friend to return home, promising to be with him as soon as my law-suit should be over, which was likely to be soon, as the opposite party, possessing great influence, desired its termination as anxiously as myself. When it was on the eve of being brought on, the secretary privately shewed me the report which he had drawn up, to convince me that it was favourable to me, and also a sketch of the decision. I almost fainted for joy, but Rubopereen soon put an end to my exultation. A friend of his, a clerk in the chancery, shewed

him another report and another sketch of a decision in favour of the Countess Neetchtózyeen, which the secretary meant actually to present to the judges. I mentioned this to Peter Petróveetch, who bestirred himself in my favour, and by his influence turned aside the worthy secretary's purpose on the very day when the report was to be given in. "I am a poor man," said the oracle of the court, "but will not sell my conscience.—Neetchtózyeen offers me five-and-twenty thousand roubles—I confess I am a sinful mortal—I would have taken the money if her cause had been good—but to do wrong I will not take a kopeek. You are not yourself a rich man at present, but when God rewards you, perhaps you will recollect my children." Although in strict justice much might be said against this sort of honesty, still, looking to things as they are, I was glad that I had met with such a good man. At last my cause came on.

CHAPTER XIV.

Usurers.—End of the Law-suit.—Marriage.—Kindness of a Grandee.—Routine of public business.—Rising people find relations.—Retirement from public life.—Conclusion.

My purse at this time was empty, yet I was not inclined to sell the crest of brilliants which I always regarded as Petroff's property, purposing to pay him for it whenever I should be in funds, and to keep it as a trophy of my victory. I might have borrowed money from Peter Petróveetch, from cousin Aneta, or from Meloveeden, but I did not chuse to trouble them—so I resolved to pledge the crest. Rubopereen went with me to the money lenders. We first entered a small hole of a shop about seven feet square, crammed to the ceiling with old tattered books in all languages, ancient and modern, covered with dust and spiders' webs. At the other end of this kennel were slumbering, cheek by jowl, a lean tom-cat and the shop-boy. Rubopereen awakened the sleeping sentinel with a fillip on the nose, and asked for Taraseetch. "You know, in the morning he goes about the courts and public offices, but now it is almost the time when he should be back here." "How can the tenant of this beggarly hole be a monied man?" asked I of Rubopereen. "Three hundred thousand at command, neither more nor less," replied Rubopereen. "This

shop is nothing more than a pretext, a corner for meetings and bargains, a sign-board of the residence of Taras Tarasoveetch Kashtcheyeff. It is a pity that this is not Saturday, the day of settling and paying the debts of the week among merchants : you would see how the shopkeepers and owners of rich warehouses and magazines flock about this hole, how they wink to Taras Tarasoveetch and beckon to him to call at their shops : he takes only three per cent. per month on pawn from people that he does not know, and to safe people he lends also upon their own bill. But let us go to another—we will see how much he is willing to give, and what value he puts upon the article.” We went to the rag-market, and there, in a booth patched together from old boards, found a middle-aged man who was occupied in reading “The History of Vanky Cain.” On the shelves in the shop there lay old nails, brass buckles, rusty padlocks, buttons, pomatum-pots, and empty phials, pieces of chalk, copperas, leathern straps, broken tea-cups and plates ; in a word, all the riches of the ash-pit. “How d’ye do, Paphnooteetch ?” said Rubopereen, tapping him on the shoulder. “Good day to your honour !” “Well, are you always flush of money ?” “What money is to be got now-a-days, sir ; trade goes on so wretchedly !” I could hardly keep from laughing at this complaint : Paphnooteetch repeated it in imitation of merchants, who, while they are continually increasing their gains, complain all along of the ruin of trade. “Have mercy upon us, my dear sir,” said I ; “when were your goods in de-

mand ! What reason have you to complain of tariffs and custom-houses ?" " Why should not I complain, when great merchants have their complaints likewise. Don't you know that the retail trade follows in the wake of the wholesale ? When the one goes forward the other goes forward ; when the one goes backward, the other goes backward." " A truce to your reasoning, Paphnooteetch," said Rubopereen : " here is a crest of brilliants ; the jewellers have valued it at fifteen thousand roubles : how much will you lend upon it ?" " Jewellers valued it !" exclaimed Paphnooteetch, " but go and sell it to them, and you'll see that they will not give you the half of that. You must tell me in the first place, for how long you wish to have the money : for you must know, the value we give depends in a great measure upon that." " A month or two at least," replied I. " That is too short a period," returned Paphnooteetch : " I cannot give more than three thousand roubles." I fell into a rage. " Thou art worse than any Jew, and deservest to be thrown into the Neva along with thy gull-trap."—" Why do you please to be angry ?" said Paphnooteetch coolly. " ' A freeman has freedom, and a saved sinner Paradise.' * If you chuse, there is nothing to prevent you from going to another, or pledging it at the Lombard." I took a hold of Rubopereen's arm and left the shop in a huff. " There is no use in getting into a passion," said Rubopereen to me ; " for, you must know, it is only bargaining. If he offered

* A Russian proverb.

at first three thousand, he would have probably gone the length of eight or nine. Usurers are themselves glad to lend out more money, in order to get in the more interest, but bargain by the strength of inveterate habit, and to shew that they give out of pure good-will.—That Paphnooteetch is more of a devil than a man. He has made several narrow escapes from the criminal court.” In the midst of our conversation, we arrived again at Kashtchéyeff’s shop and found him busy turning over bills and receipts. “Now, Taraseetch, bestir yourself, we want fifty thousand—count it out and we will give you a whole bagful of diamonds.” “Where am I to get such an immense sum of money?” said he, fetching a long breath and squinting at me through his eye-lashes: “Times are far from good! But if you have value, let me see it; perhaps I may scrape it together among my friends.” “I was jesting, I was jesting,” said Rubopereen, “because you always feign yourself poor. But this is what we want: we have an article worth fifteen thousand roubles, and we want ten thousand.” “That is too much, but let us see it.” “Will you please to accompany me to my house—you know that I live quite near.”

We entered Kashtchéyeff’s house. He was a single man, and only an old cook and disbanded invalid watched over his premises, not daring to move a step from the door together. There were three rooms in pretty decent order. One of the walls of his bedroom was quite covered over with sacred pictures, in gold and silver frames: before them a lamp was burning.

Beside the bed there stood an immense iron-chest. Kashtchéyeff begged us to shew him the article, turned it over and over in his hands, higgled a good while, and at last gave nine thousand roubles at three per cent. per month, and, on condition that I should take the money for a half-year, and grant the following acknowledgement :—" I, the undersigned, have sold to the merchant Kashtchéyeff a diamond crest for ten thousand six hundred and twenty roubles, which I have a right to buy back for this sum at any time within six months ; but after six months my right to redeem it ceases." I would not at first agree to write that I had sold the article, but Rubopereen assured me that it was a mere form, and that Kashtchéyeff was a safe man. " If you please, sir," said Kashtchéyeff, " we must not expose ourselves to danger. We bring down upon ourselves calamity by interfering with great folks who are in the same line. An acknowledgement is necessary, in order to include the interest and clear ourselves in case of any complaint. It sometimes happens that, when payment becomes due, we are charged with usury. So you see, we must take care of ourselves."

If I wished to punish my readers, I might fill several volumes with a description of my law-suit which lasted several months ; but after all, I might save myself the trouble, for nobody would read it.

Notwithstanding all the exertions of the Countess Neetchtozyeen and the influence of her friends, providence saved me ; the cause was decided in my favour, and all at once I received upwards of a million of roubles.

I hitherto loved company because I did not know what to do at home. I had received flattering attentions in Moscow, and was in some measure obliged to visit at houses where I was always expected. I never engaged in favour-seeking : Meloveeden and cousin Aneta always took that duty upon themselves in my behalf. But in Petersburg, cousin Aneta who had already passed her bloom, had no great influence: I had no adviser besides her, and I entirely left off frequenting society, partly from false shame and partly not to appear as if I was in want of patronage which I had really no hopes of obtaining. The greater part of the people who occupy a conspicuous figure in Petersburg society, are friends or connections of public men; and nothing is more intolerable or mortifying to a man of any feeling, than, when he appears in company, to be received with a general coldness, which is sure to be the case at the mere name of a petitioner. Every body avoids being alone with a man who has a law-suit, for fear of being pestered with a request to assist him or forward his views, or of being obliged to listen to vituperation of the judges and complaints of injustice. From my previous observations in the cases of others, I did not chuse to play the part of a *Lazarus*, but preferred to steer clear of the great world. I was fortunate in my little circle, of which Oleenka was the ornament. My mother was so fond of her that she could not pass a single day without her; and Oleenka on her part kept my mother company from morning till night, when she returned home to cousin Aneta.

I had no sooner gained my law-suit than, in the

course of three days, I received so many visiting cards and invitations to dinners and *soirees*, that in three months it would have been impossible to return the one or comply with the other. On looking over the cards, I was surprised to see the name of Grabeelen. Every day I made ready to begin my visits, and every day was obliged to desist from my purpose ; time slipped away so rapidly in the company of Oleenka that I had none to spare.

Peter Petróveetch invited me to his house one evening to talk over by ourselves my plans and hopes. He knew already of my love for Oleenka, and advised me to marry as soon as possible, if I was sure of a reciprocal affection. " My dear friend," said he, " happiness comes from heaven like dew, and grief like a thunder-shower. Seize upon the moment which is favourable to your happiness, and refresh your soul with pure love. There is no higher pleasure upon earth than true love and friendship. The soul to which they belong is capable of every thing great and good. But it is not given to every one to enjoy these blessings in perfection, however capable the mind may be of feeling them. I too have loved and been loved, but death snatched away my happiness—I am now grown old—I cannot think of love, but seek pleasure in friendship alone."

By Peter Petróveetch's advice, I hired a small but comfortable dwelling, set up an equipage, and, putting some money into cousin Aneta's hands, begged her to select a suitable outfitting for my bride. The worthy Aneta would fain have furnished a part of it at her own expence, but to this I would by no means consent.

All these preparations were concealed from Oleenka who did not see her wardrobe or jewels till the wedding-day arrived. "My friend!" said she, when she saw them, "thou lovedst me poor, and I avowed my love to thee when thou wast in prison. Now thou art rich, and I am glad on thy account of the change in thy lot; but, as far as regards myself, I confess, it would have been more agreeable to me to love thee a poor man."

Peter Petróveetch undertook to give away the bride, and besides him nobody but cousin Aneta and her family was invited. Aneta's husband forsook upon this occasion his whist-party at the English club, being tempted by a Strasburg tart which his wife procured for the purpose of keeping him at home. When we were all ready to go to church, I received a packet with my address upon it: on opening it, I found a hundred thousand roubles in bank receipts, along with the following letter:—

"Mr. Ivan Ivanoveetch!

"The disobedience of your bride's mother induced her parent, who is my wife, to disinherit her. Notwithstanding all my entreaties and representations, she would never agree to restore the patrimony to her grandchild, being influenced by reports which she heard to her prejudice. I intentionally made a trial of her virtue, and became convinced that she possesses noble feelings, and has not left the path of honour. This induced me again to have recourse to my wife, and I have at last succeeded in obtaining what I so ardently desired. The money which belongs to your bride is transmitted along with this, and I beg you will in-

clude me in the number of your sincere friends and respecters.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"JEREMIAH GRABEELEN."

I could not get the better of my astonishment, and handed the letter to Peter Petróveetch, who smiled and pulled out of his pocket another letter which he gave me to read. These were its contents—

"Mr. Peter Petróveetch !

"The patronage and particular friendship displayed by your Excellency towards Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen, who is about to marry a grand-daughter of my wife, have induced me to interfere in favour of your friend, and I have succeeded in getting my wife's consent to restore to his bride her mother's patrimony. Take it as a mark of my particular respect and devotion to you, and as a proof that I am not selfish, but maliciously slandered by evil-minded people, from whom also you have suffered much. From no views of ambition or selfishness would I again wish to enter the service, but merely in order to shew the world that I am not such a one as my enemies represent me, and also to have an opportunity of guiding my children into the career of active duty. I may be of use by my experience in business, and will always endeavour to merit your good opinion. I know that your word is of itself sufficient to procure me what I want. I would wish to receive a small situation of respectability, and such as yielded considerable emoluments, of which I would not pocket a kopeek, being in good circumstances, and free from selfish motives, as you may perceive

from my behaviour towards your protégé Vejeeghen.

"With this I have the honour to be, &c.

"JEREMIAH GRABEELLEN."

"The rogue!" said I. "And fool at the same time," replied Petroveetch: "none but fools could suppose that they are able to deceive every body and conceal themselves from the penetration of a man who has his eyes about him. If they were wise, they would see it to be for their own interest to be honest. Among rogues there is a sort of instinct which guides them in deceit, for it cannot be called reason, nor can it ever be a match for sound, sterling sense."

When I related to Oleenka the contents of the letter, and put the bank-billets into her hands, "I do not know," said she, "whether I ought not to return the money to my grandmother, although it is my mother's property; but I would like better that I had nothing at all and to be obliged for every thing to thee alone. Take the money and do with it what thou pleasest."

Two months passed in perfect happiness, and the visiting still remained neglected. Oleenka resolutely declined forming any new acquaintance. "As you please, my dear friend! but I cannot help regarding as strange that custom among young married people of driving about a-visiting the third day after marriage, to seek acquaintances for no imaginable reason but as a preservative against approaching ennui, to show off their new equipage on the promenades, and their shawls and diamonds in assemblies, as if this was an essential part of conjugal bliss. Let us have patience —acquaintances are formed by chance, by mutual

choice, and I am at present content with thy company, with thy mother, and my benefactress Aneta."

Peter Petróveetch grew so attached to us that he came every day to dinner, and passed the greater part of the evening. One day he brought along with him a stranger, an elderly man, of a ruddy and hale appearance, with a physiognomy which expressed cheerfulness and goodness of heart. The stranger, on perceiving me, made a stop, attempted to resume his usual smile, but all at once pressed me to his heart and burst into tears, exclaiming, "What a resemblance ! It is he, exactly he !" Then recovering his composure he added : "I was a friend of your father's, his school-companion, and also a distant relation. You have heard perhaps of Count Bezpetcheen ?" "Is it you, trustee of my father !" "Who did not, however, succeed in carrying his wishes into execution, but can only rejoice that Providence has protected thee." The Count desired to see my wife and mother, sat with us till it was late, was cheerful and amiable, and without farther preamble told me that I should consider him as my second father, and that he would be with us every day.

The Count was an extremely worthy and well-bred man ; but having been accustomed from the days of his childhood to have others to labour for him, he spent his time in reading, in agreeable conversation, and in travelling, and had an insuperable aversion to take an active part in business, though he continued in the service, partly through ambition and partly on account of his decayed circumstances. His family, his connections, his long continuance in the service, his uprightness and ho-

nesty, and lastly, his insensibly acquired experience in business, paved the way for his entrance into the high situation which he was now called to fill. One evening at the tea-table, he said : " Vejeeghen ! I am come to offer you the situation of director of my chancery." " Have mercy upon me, Count ! I have not the smallest experience in business, and may do more harm than good. When I was poor, I sought a place for the sake of a livelihood, but now I would on no account undertake what I do not understand. If I had been wanted to command a squadron, and still remained a bachelor, I would have decided in a minute. But what you propose is as strange to me as the Chinese language." " Nonsense, friend," replied the Count ; " I can find more men of business than I have any occasion for : but what I want is an honest man, who, I was certain, would not deceive me nor allow himself to be corrupted." " But if this honest man should be deceived ?" asked I. " He must be also shrewd and attentive—he will then soon learn the course of business." I wished to object and decline the offer, but Peter Petróveetch overruled me, saying that for public affairs honest and disinterested people are absolutely necessary as a check upon the men of business. I consented.

By a strange concurrence of circumstances, I occupied the situation of the brother of the Moscow police-inspector, Arkheep Arkheepetch, and removed to the quarters of Panteleimon Arkheepetch, in which he had no room for his poor brother. Panteleimon had been expelled from the service, and put upon his trial

for nothing at all, according to his own words. But, as he had a wife and children, he made no doubt of being acquitted by exciting sympathy for a man with a family. He found a strong protector in Tchoovasheen already mentioned.

Of the public building belonging to this department, Panteleimon had occupied upwards of twenty rooms himself, assigned about thirty to his favourite underlings, and confined the chancery within four small apartments. The horses assigned for dispatching messengers he made use of himself, the guards he employed as his servants, and the couriers were taken up in running errands to the milliners and dress-makers' shops, and carrying about the town his daughters' and wife's correspondence, and invitation-cards. The clerks having no room for working, crowded about the windows, and passed the time in reading newspapers and talking nonsense, putting their hands only to *interesting* cases, about which they received particular orders from Panteleimon Arkheepeetch. Three fourths of the *employés* were there merely for the sake of the honours and rewards to which their family influence gave them a claim; the remainder did the work of all the rest, for a bit of daily bread, and in hopes of bettering themselves. There was such a heap of undecided cases that it was shocking to look at the shelves on which they were piled. It was obvious that every thing had to be changed and put upon a new footing. At first I thought of consulting with some one how to set about the necessary reform, but at last resolved to rely upon my own common sense,

and proceeded to establish the very reverse of every thing which had been there before. I allotted twenty apartments for the chancery, took six for myself, and the remainder I assigned for the clerks, keeping only so many of them as were absolutely necessary for actual service. I dismissed all the aspirants after rewards and honours, telling them to seek for what they wanted on the field of battle, if they had no inclination for the pen, and declaring at the same time that I could give no certificates till all the undecided business should be gone through.

There was one of the clerks in the chancery, Sophron Sophronoveetch Zakonenko who had the name of being a thorough-bred man of business : he was no favourite of my predecessor, but had been retained by him because he could not do without him. I called him one day to a private consultation, paid him some civilities, and begged him to explain to me the course of chancery-business, and to put me upon a plan for getting through with the hideous load of papers which had been suffered to accumulate. This is what Mr. Zakonenko said :—

“ It is only in the courts of law where decisions are made in the form prescribed by the Ukase, that the secretary is obliged to look over the whole case for the purpose of drawing up a summary and preparing a decision. It will occur to any one that looks at the immense pile with which our chancery is filled, consisting of several thousand sheets of paper, that the man must have the wisdom of a Solomon, and the strength of a Sampson, who can wade through such

a slough of writing. Some tact is absolutely necessary. You have only to read the first petitions of the litigating parties at the opening of the law-suit ; then the primary decision of the court, then the petition of appeal, the decision of the second instance, to corroborate the references to the laws—and you are at home. All the rest is superfluous and nothing but talk. From the last decision you form your conclusion, what is to be left in full force, what to be annulled, what to be added, and your resolution is ready. In chanceries which have no right to decide, but are only obliged to investigate cases and petitions to be laid before their superior for a conclusion, who on his part sends them elsewhere for a decision, or sends his decisions for confirmation, there the arrangement is quite different. Here all the necessary knowledge consists in the art of rincing the paper skilfully, that is to say of passing the paper over several tables, and bringing it out of the chancery with another face, but with the same body as when it came in. For this nothing is wanted but calculation and practice, to draw up a report with reference or connexion, and including the same circumstances of the case, to shift them to another place. For this you have also no occasion to trouble his Highness ; who, as you may please to know, is not overfond of law papers. With regard to the cases on which the Count must indorse his own conclusions, you must be very cautious. His Highness is a conscientious man, and does not like to sign papers which he has not read, and to decide upon a case of which he knows nothing ; he will lay it aside,

business will accumulate, and owing to that, the Count, yourself, and the whole chancery will get a bad name. Our activity and exactness is measured by the number of law papers which we dispatch. Here is then a way to quiet the Count's conscience, and get rapidly through with business, by the composition of forms of decisions which neither help nor hinder the case, of whatever sort it may be. Here for instance are some general decisions : *To make an investigation and report in due course ; to proceed according to the existing arrangement ; to transmit to the place to which it belongs for an explanation of all the circumstances, and after that, to report ; to present to the higher authority for inspection ; to follow the regular course ; to return to the proper place for a conclusion according to law, and to bring to light all the particulars of the case ; to request an opinion from the place from whence the affair came, and transmit it to the proper quarter ; to receive upon trial, &c.* Private issues are still more easily dealt with ; for instance ; *to ask in a regular way if he has a right to what he claims ; to state the case more fully ; to transmit to the proper quarter ; to wait till the termination of the business ; to investigate farther and then report ; to ask the opinion of the local authority ; to confirm the former decision ; but best of all ; for want of material reasons, to reject, to reject, to reject !* that is both short and clear.

Amidst the multiplicity of business, I was obliged, in spite of myself, to have recourse to the means pointed out by Sophron Sophronoveetch. Papers slipped

through my hands, and were dispatched by thousands, and I soon passed for a prodigy of punctuality and activity. It is true that I took pains upon some of the most important cases, that is to say, I gave them to confidential clerks to read, and to put together short extracts, with a conclusion founded on the real state of the case and the legal authorities ; and in order to observe some arrangement in the choice of business, I wrote down cyphers on separate cards, and made my wife draw them by way of lottery : whatever number she pulled out, regulated the case which I was to take into consideration : this gave me a character for impartiality. In the meantime other papers were dispatched with decisions according to the prescriptions of Sophron Sophronoveetch. Count Bezpetcheen was extremely well pleased with me, and thankful because I did away with the unfavourable opinion which had been current respecting him. From a lazy man he passed for the very reverse. In order to give the greater strength to this opinion, he allotted one morning every week for receiving. On other occasions the Swiss at the door had always the same answer, *engaged*,—while the Count, shut up in his cabinet, was lying upon a sofa reading newspapers and new romances. In the evening he came and drank tea with my wife, and at the same time signed the law-papers. Peter Petróveetch assisted us materially, making short remarks upon cases which fell under his eye : we followed his opinion literally and never erred by so doing.

God gave me a son to increase our family happiness, and the Count took great delight in dandling the infant

in his arms, lamenting at the same time while he looked on Oleenka, that he had remained all his life a bachelor. Slandrous tongues took occasion to represent his friendship in another point of view, and many people who were discontented with me, gave credit to the report that the Count was a lover of my wife; but those who knew him better, saw through the injustice of their inferences, which I laughed at as they deserved.

Peter Petróveetch making use of his opportunities of doing good, promoted all the honest men whom he had formerly known, and, among the rest, procured for the worthy Shtweekoff the situation of governor, and for the merchant Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, the rank of commercial counsellor. I followed the example of Peter Petróveetch, and drew out of obscurity many worthy people: among the rest I gave the honest *Kvartálny Nádzeeratl*, Arkheep Arkhéepetch, the situation of overseer of a ward in Petersburg which was the highest object of his wishes.

As it was no secret that I enjoyed the unlimited confidence of Count Bezpetcheen, and the complete controul of that department of state, over which he presided, it was impossible to remain in a state of seclusion. My house was literally stormed by claimants of all sorts, the parties in lawsuits, the friends of young men wanting rewards and promotions, and last but not least, my own relations who of themselves made a formidable host. Among the rest appeared three cousins by the mother's side, sons of my uncle Alexey Petróveetch, who on my grandfather's death had settled as a merchant in Vitebsk and acquired a

decent competence. His children were ashamed to remain in the mercantile profession, when they heard of their cousin being such a great man ; and, as the first step on the ladder of promotion, got the Chamberlain Krootchkotvorsky to draw up for them a certificate, shewing that they belonged to the smaller sort of nobility. Even the Neetchtózyeens did not think it beneath them to solicit the patronage of their relation whom they had persecuted. The ladies, who in Moscow had received me into their houses and befriended me, did not fail to remind me of the obligation, and accordingly sent their grandsons and nephews in dozens to my care. At home, in the chancery, in company, in the theatre, on the promenades, and wherever I went, I was sure to have some of these claimants at my elbow. Three years I passed in this perplexing condition, till at length, having neither time for business, nor leisure for domestic comfort, I set off for Moscow on a month's leave of absence, and from thence gave in a petition for my discharge, accompanied with piteous letters to Count Bezpetcheen and Peter Petróveetch, begging them to free me from my intolerable yoke.

While I waited in Moscow for a determination of my fate, I learned from one of my acquaintances who had just returned from abroad, that poor Groonya finished her career in the hospital of St. Lazare in Paris. I wept over her memory. Unfortunate girl ! With her mind and person, she might have been the ornament of her sex, if in her youth she had attended to the improvement of her heart. Here I also learned that Scotinko had lost his reason, and that his children,

after squandering his ill-gotten wealth, were living in poverty. Sava Saveetch was turned out of his situation, and lost his life in a fire which happened in a drinking house. Zarayzeen died of wounds received in a scuffle : of the other gamblers I could get no intelligence, except of Oodáveetch, who was then on his trial before the criminal court.

After a long correspondence, I at last received my discharge. At this time I learned from Meloveeden, who wrote me regularly, that within a verst of him, on the sea-coast, there was a small but beautiful estate for sale in a picturesque situation, with a large garden and vineyard. I immediately sent money to buy it in the name of my wife ; and set off with my family and mother to join Meloveeden. It is needless to add with what transports he and Petronella received us ; we resolved to spend the rest of our days on the southern coast of Taurida.

I have now lived happily ten years in the enjoyment of domestic comfort, and in the embraces of love and friendship. I have three sons and one daughter : Meloveeden has only one son. We employ ourselves in the elementary education of our children, and pass the time in pleasant conversation, music, and reading ; in walking about and superintending the cultivation of our fields. We are cheerful and at ease, because we seek for nothing, and do as much good as we can. My mother passes her time with Meloveeden's uncle, tells fortunes with the cards, and plays at Tentérey.

Petroff nurses the children, and makes play-things for them, tells the boys about battles, and teaches them to march.

After my variety of experience in the conditions of servant and master, subaltern and superior, Kirgheezian cavalier, and Russian warrior, laziness and activity, spendthrift, and gambler in spite of myself ;—after obtaining a knowledge of men in prosperity and adversity ;—I have retired from the world, but have never stifled the flame of kindly affection towards my fellow creatures. I am persuaded that mankind are more weak than wicked, and that for one bad man you will probably find fifty good, who are not noticed in the crowd, because one bad man makes more noise in the world than a hundred good. I rejoice that I am a Russian ; nay, notwithstanding our oddities and caprices, which are inseparable from humanity as diseases are from our mortal condition, I may dare to affirm that there is not a nation in the world which is more sensible, worthy, and grateful than ours. There is not an empire on the face of the earth in which travelling is attended with less risk than in our little-peopled, woody, and steppy Russia ; nor is there any country where the unfortunate are assisted with such good-will, nor where religious toleration, hospitality, and social tranquillity more generally prevail.

Meloveeden's uncle, in his extreme old age, with difficulty deciphering the letters in Bruce's Calendar, and in the Mirror of Albert the Great, prophesies, that soon, very soon, education, with virtue in its train, will visit every corner of the Russian empire, and spread its gifts through all classes of the community ;

that Russian grandees and ladies will speak Russian, read Russian books, and smile at the propensities of their fathers for every thing exotic ; that our literature will rise to a level with that of England, France, and Germany ; that young people will strive to be useful to their country, in place of canvassing for certificates in order to raise themselves by favour and not by merit ; that the merchants becoming more and more enlightened, will no longer seek after patents of nobility, but form among themselves a respectable, influential, class of society ; that justice will raise her head every where, supported by a rational jurisprudence ; that from the lowest to the highest tribunals, bribe-takers and mischief-makers will no longer prey upon the community. These prophecies have made me take up my pen and describe my adventures, to preserve from oblivion such heroes as Scotinko, Sava Saveetch, and the like, whose existence will probably be discredited in future ages as much as giants and enchanters are in the present day. If my writing in the course of time should find readers, an attentive perusal ought to convince them, that all the evil in the world proceeds from an insufficiency of moral education, and all the good from real sound knowledge. Critics will forgive my faults for the sake of my good intentions, and see that the bad is here introduced for no other purpose than to throw more splendour on the good.

THE END.





